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HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

By JOHN B. HARWOOD, AUTHOR OF 'LADY FLAVIA'

CHAPTER I.—THREATENED.

'No, my lord; I do not know him; nor, I think, does any one in the village. But during the few weeks that I have been at High Tor Churchtown, I have seen him very often indeed.'

The speaker was a young girl, of some twenty years at most. Her bearing was grave and modest, and her attire scrupulously plain; but there are cases in which sovereign beauty will assert herself, and Ethel Gray, the newly appointed school-mistress, was more than pretty. That slender form and faultless face, the dazzling purity of the complexion, and the lustre of the violet eyes, that contrasted so well with the wealth of dark hair simply braided back from the temples and twisted into a massive coil—these conferred beauty, if ever woman, since Eve's time, deserved to be called beautiful.

It was a bright balmy day in June, and through the large window of the school-room, now open, floated the scent of flowers and the hum of bees. Within the room, standing beside the teacher, were two gentlemen; while on each side of the table stood the children, their wondering eyes fixed upon the visitors. They well knew the kindly face of the gray-haired Earl of Wolverhampton, the older of the two, whose park-gates were almost within sight of the school of which he was patron. But they had never before seen the shrewd rugged features of the middle-aged member of parliament, the Right Hon. Stephen Hammond, Under-secretary of State, by whom he was accompanied.

Ethel Gray's words had been uttered in reply to an inquiry from the Earl as to a swarthy man of sinister aspect and powerful build who was lounging near the low gate of the school-house garden.

'That is not a face,' said the Earl, thinking of quarter-sessions, tramps, gipsies, and poachers—

'which I am pleased to see here among my good people.—What is your opinion, Hammond, of the owner of it?'

'I think that I had rather not meet him on a dark night,' answered the Under-secretary with a smile. 'But perhaps, after all, the man is only some sailor newly paid off; though he has a reckless unpleasant look in any case.'

Perceiving himself to be an object of attention to the occupants of the school-room window, the rough fellow who had been lingering at the gate now turned on his heel, and with an air half-defiant, half-abashed, slunk away.

Nor was it long before the old Earl and his guest, with an urbane word or two of leave-taking to the pretty teacher, quitted the school, and re-entered the carriage, which had been awaiting them in the leafy lane beyond. Lord Wolverhampton, as the horses' heads were turned towards High Tor, looked and felt pleased. He took an interest in the schools, as he did in every detail of his property; and he had been anxious for the Under-secretary's approbation concerning them. The Right Hon. Stephen Hammond had, in the course of the tour which he was hurriedly making through the country, visited many such places of education, probably with a view to Hansard and Blue-books; but he was frankly willing to give its meed of praise to that of which his noble host was the patron. And praise from Mr Hammond was worth the having.

The carriage rolled on between high banks crested with hazels and gay with wild-flowers, until at last it passed between the sturdy gate-posts of blue Cornish granite, topped by the grim heraldic monsters which the De Veres had borne on their shields in battle for many a year before they had become possessed of the ancient barony of Harrogate or the modern earldom of Wolver-



hampton. It was a pretty park enough that of High Tor, with its huge sycamores and avenue of wych-elms, the fallow-deer feeding peacefully among the ancient hawthorn trees, the tinkling trout-stream, and the lofty crag that stood forth like a giant sentinel, as though to protect the mansion itself, surrounded by its gardens and shrubberies.

'Those are fine beeches!' observed Mr Hammond, pointing to a clump of silvan Titans that reared their canopy of leaves on a hill far away.

'Ah!' said the Earl, as a momentary shade passed across his face; 'those are not on my land. They are on the other side of the ring-fence, and belong to Sir Sykes, at Carbery Chase.'

'It was all one property once, I think?' said Mr Hammond.

'Yes; but that was a long time ago,' rejoined the Earl; but he did not enlarge upon the subject, and the carriage rolled in silence along the well-kept road towards the house.

Meanwhile the man whose loitering near the school of High Tor had attracted some notice, had cleared the village, and was traversing one of those deep lanes, with high banks densely wooded, for which that southern county is famous. The nut boughs almost interlaced their slender branches over his head as he passed beneath their shadow, and the ferns grew so thickly that it was but here and there, in golden patches, that the broken sunbeams could filter through them. The wayfarer was, however, to judge from appearances, by no means one of those for whom the coy beauty of wild-flowers, or the soft greenery of the woodlands, or the carol of the birds, could have any peculiar attraction. He pushed on, not hurrying his pace, but moodily indifferent to the hundred pretty sights and sounds that vainly invited his attention.

In person the stranger was, as has been mentioned, powerfully built, and still active and vigorous, although his crisp dark hair was grizzled by age or hardship. His keen restless eyes, sullen mouth, and lowering looks, were scarcely calculated to inspire confidence. His sunburnt face had evidently known the heat of a fiercer sun than that of Britain; and near the corner of the mouth there was a dull white scar, half-hidden by the clustering beard. Mr Hammond's conjecture as to the seafaring character of the man was perhaps warranted by his attire, which was of a coarse blue pilot-cloth, such as is worn not by sailors only, but by many dwellers on the coast, whose calling leads them to associate with mariners; and as regarded his bearing, he might as easily have been taken for an Australian digger or Cornish miner as for a seaman.

Such as he was, Ethel Gray was right in saying that this man's darkling face had been very frequently to be seen in the village of High Tor during the few weeks of her residence there. Who he was or whence he came, no one knew. But he did nothing illegal in loitering about the trim straggling street; and as our modern system does not encourage rural Dogberries to meddle with suspected 'vagrom men,' he was left practically unmolested as he lounged to and fro, talking little, but listening much in the tap-room of the village ale-house, where the rustics recognised in him the merit of one who carried spare silver in his pocket, and would invest a little of it in

elemosynary pots of beer. Himself not over-communicative, he seemed to have an aptitude for making others talk; and if to learn the politics of the parish was his desire, he certainly ought to have become tolerably well versed in them.

The swarthy slouching fellow trudged on, indifferent to the pale blush of the wild-roses, to the scent of the violets, or to the fresh clear song of the blackbird. He was thinking, thinking deeply, perceptibly indeed, had any one been there to watch him, for the veins and muscles of his beetling brows swelled and rose frowningly, as they do with some men while racking their brains. Presently he emerged into a broader and drier road than the moist shady lane which he had traversed, and saw before him the lodge-gates of a park, the stone piers of which were surmounted by a pair of couchant greyhounds in marble. One of the side-gates stood always open, since there exists an ancient right of way through Carbery Chase; and unchallenged, the stranger passed through the gateway and entered the demesne. It was a fair scene on which he looked. The golden sunshine fell, as if lovingly, on the rustling beech-trees and spreading oaks, the ferny dells and grassy uplands, the ancient trees of the grand avenue, and the bold blue swell of Dartmoor rising bleakly to the northward.

Full in front, seen through a vista of lofty elms, was the great house, rising stately in its fair proportions; mullion and ogive, and gable and turret, and every detail, to the very vanes that flashed and glittered on roof and tower, looking very much as they must have looked when Queen Elizabeth deigned to show her skill as an archeress, to the detriment of the dappled deer in the wide park beyond. The silver-plumaged swans yet rode the tranquil waters of the mere, the burnished pheasants exhibited their gaudy feathers on the sunny bank beneath the fir-spinnys, and the peacocks swept their gorgeous trains along the stone terrace that skirted the house, as when Tudor royalty had been feasted there.

It is seldom in England that two mansions of pretensions equal to High Tor and Carbery Court lie so near together. But in point of splendour there could be no comparison between the two. The grand Elizabethan house, justly described in the red-bound county guide-book as 'a magnificent place, now the seat of Sir Sykes Denzil, Bart.,' far surpassed in size and in symmetry the smaller and older dwelling of Sir Sykes's noble neighbour. No one would have credited the sunburnt stranger with any great share of artistic taste or architectural interest, yet he stood still at an angle of the road whence he could command an uninterrupted view of Carbery Court, and shading his eyes with his broad hand, gazed at it with an intentness that was not a little remarkable. 'A tidy crib!' he muttered at last. 'No wonder if a chap would run a bit of risk, and pitch overboard any ballast in the way of scruples, to be owner of such a place as that. And yet!'

He snapped his fingers contemptuously as he spoke, but nevertheless broke off abruptly in his soliloquy, and drawing out from the breast-pocket of his rough coat a leathern tobacco-pouch and a short clay pipe, filled and lighted the latter, and leaning against the huge bole of an elm-tree, smoked for some time in silence. But if his outspoken self-communings had come to an end, it would

seem that the train of thought which had suggested them had sustained no interruption, to judge by the stealthy glances which he cast now and again towards the grand mansion, flanked as it was by all the appliances of wealth—park and lake and gardens, home-farm and stabling, pheasantry, and paddocks where thoroughbred colts disported themselves during the brief period of liberty that precedes the education of such equine aristocrats.

A stray policeman passing by would probably have set down the swarthy stranger as an intending burglar taking a distant survey of the scene of his projected operations; but the mixture of emotions which the man's callous face expressed was of by far too complex a character to be summed up in so commonplace a fashion. There was covetousness to be sure, and perhaps a spice of malignity; but what appeared to predominate was a species of cynical enjoyment of the thinker's own cunning, not unusual with crafty but uneducated persons, who see themselves on the brink of success. Whatever might be the nature of the man's meditations, they were presently cut short by the sound of hoofs on the smooth road near him, as a gentleman riding slowly from the lodge-gates towards the house came in sight.

As the rider approached him, the man, who had been leaning against the tree, started, and with an impatient gesture, knocked the ashes out of his exhausted pipe; then jerking down his hat over his brows with the air of one whose instinct or purpose it is to shun observation, he strode off, striking into a side-road which led towards another gate of the park, by which entrance could be made from the northward. Some minutes of brisk walking brought him to the verge of the park, whence he emerged into a wild and broken district of imperfectly cultivated country lying at the foot of the Dartmoor uplands, that rolled away in front of him to the edge of the horizon.

For some half a mile beyond the park-wall, the well-tilled fields, the fences in good repair, and the trim aspect of the few dwellings that studded the country, differed in no respect from such fields and fences, such farms and cottages as lay between High Tor and Carbery. But when the pedestrian reached a guide-post the pointing finger of which was inscribed with the words, 'To Nomanland, Dedman's Hollow, and Dartmoor,' he began to see before him evidences that he had left behind him the carefully managed Carbery property, and had entered on a barren region skirting the Royal Forest, and inhabited by a race of squatters who wrested with difficulty a bare subsistence from the sterile soil.

Passing on amid the ragged hedges, the lean cattle, squalid children, and tumble-down hovels of this unattractive population, but acknowledging twice or thrice a half-sullen nod or growl of recognition on the part of some male member of the community who stood whistling or chewing a straw at gate or gap, the wayfarer at last reached a spot where, at the junction of four narrow lanes, stood a dilapidated house of entertainment, its thatched roof stained and broken, and with not a few of the panes in its unwashed windows rudely replaced by boards or sackcloth. An inscription in faded letters over the low-browed doorway had reference to a license to retail beer and spirits for consumption on the premises, and tobacco; while a board nailed to a

dead tree hard by bore, in thin black characters, the name of *The Traveller's Rest*. And into *The Traveller's Rest* the stranger dived, with all the air of one who feels himself at home.

CURLING.

WHEN a black frost seals up the ground, and ice covers our ponds and lochs, among the amusements then open to those north of the Tweed there is none more healthful and exhilarating than the game of curling, the mode of playing at which we shall presently explain for the benefit of our non-initiated readers. This 'manly Scottish exercise,' as the old poet Pennycuik calls it, is, as we once before hinted, the worthiest rival of golf in Scotland. Alas, however, it fights this battle under immense disadvantages; the good old times seem to have passed away, when for weeks on end,

O'er burn and loch the warlock Frost
A crystal brig would lay,

and good ice might be confidently counted on for a long time. But being a pastime solely depending upon ice, and good ice, for its existence, this only makes the ardent votaries of the game the more eager to take every advantage of such fleeting chances as the variable winters of our day send them. Night has often been added to day, when the interest in a great match has been more intense than the frost, and the ice has shown any signs of passing away.

It is *always* a trial for a curler to see a sheet of ice unoccupied; and when, on a Sunday, the 'crystal brig' on some fine loch lies smooth and keen, who has not seen hopeful enthusiasts taking a glance at the virgin expanse, with expression of countenance impossible to misunderstand! The marvel is that the strong temptation is so universally resisted, and that no effect has followed the example set by that Bishop of Orkney two centuries ago, whose 'process,' says Baillie in his Letters, 'came before us; he was a curler on the Sabbath-day.'

No game promotes sociality more than curling; none unites on one common platform the different classes of society better than it does.

The tenant and his jolly laird,
The pastor and his flock,

join in the game without patronage on any side or any loss of respect on the other. Harmony and friendly feeling prevail; and if, on the ice as elsewhere, all men are not equal, it is because a quick eye, a sound head, and a steady hand make now the shepherd, now the laird, 'king o' a' the core.'

Though so eminently a Scottish game, evidence goes to prove that the pastime was brought to us from the continent not very long ago—three hundred years or so. Some ultra-patriotic curlers claim for it indeed a native origin, or at least one lost in the mists of antiquity, citing a passage in *Osian* to prove that the Fingalian heroes beguiled their winters with the game, because in one passage it is said 'Swaran bends at the stone of might;' but this notwithstanding, it is quite clear that, as in the case of golf, we are indebted to outsiders for the first rough sketches of the 'roaring game.' The technical language of the game is all of Low Country origin, and it is supposed to have been introduced into this country by the Flemish emigrants who

settled in Scotland about the end of the fifteenth century. No mention of it is made by any writer for long after this; but it must have been well known in 1607, for Camden, in his *Britannia*, published in that year, says that in the little island of Copinsha, near the Orkneys, 'are to be found in great plenty excellent stones for the game called curling.'

At this time and for long after, the game appears to have been merely a rough kind of quoiting on ice; indeed for a great part of the last century its common name in this country was *Kuting*. The stones of that day, rough undressed blocks—so different from the polished missiles now used—had no handle, but merely a kind of hollow or niche for the finger and thumb, and were evidently intended to be *thrown* for at least part of the course. Since these days, great strides have been taken in the improvement of the game; now it is highly scientific, and with its many delicate strokes, its 'wicks,' calculations of angles, of force, and of bias, it may without presumption be called the billiards of ice. In some places, however, the old game with its primitive implements, usually flattish stones from the bed of the nearest stream, still holds its place under the name of 'channelling.'

In the bead-roll of curling are no such mighty names as those that golf boasts of; our winter game has not got mixed up with historic events and personages, as the older pastime has; but what her devotees lack in greatness is made up by the intense affection shewn by them in all ages for their favourite sport. It appears to have been a great game with poets. Allan Ramsay and Burns allude to it, and a host of minor bards have sung its praises at varying lengths, but with uniform appreciation of its excellences. One of the most eloquent passages in Christopher North's *Winter Rhapsody* deplores the falling popularity of the game in his later days; for like many other good things, curling has had its ups and downs in this world. In some few districts where it once flourished for a time, the interest in the game has died out; but of later years the establishment of so many clubs has given a new impetus to the game, which now prospers in its season beyond all former experience. The south-western districts of Scotland were long the chosen home of curling, and the players of Lanark and Dumfriesshire were specially renowned for their great skill in the art; but now it has spread over the whole country, and the grand matches of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club witness the friendly rivalry of worthy foemen from Maidenkirk to John o' Groat's, and excite the enthusiasm of branch clubs south of the Tweed, and even across the Atlantic.

At Edinburgh, perhaps as much as at any other place, has the game prospered within the last century, though in one point the game has lost a recognition it once had, if we believe the old tradition that, about a hundred and fifty years ago, the Town-Council used to go to the ice in all the pomp and circumstance that it now reserves for the Commissioner's procession, with a band playing 'appropriate airs' before it, which discoursed sweet music while the fathers of the city gave an hour or two to the game. The citizens then played on the Nor' Loch, a sheet of water which in those days divided the Old Town from the New; when it was drained they went to the ponds at Canonmills, and subsequently to Dud-

dingston Loch, where arose the Duddingston Curling Club, instituted in 1795, which has done great things in infusing a new spirit into the game. Among its members have been many fine curlers and good fellows, famed in other fields than this; and even if the Club had done nothing beyond giving us the capital songs of Sir Alexander Boswell, Miller, and many others, it would have still deserved well of its country.

Of late years, however, there has arisen a mightier than it—the Royal Caledonian Curling Club—now forty years old, which numbers among its members most curlers of note, both at home and abroad; and to which are affiliated all the local societies, who once a year, when the weather permits, send their chosen champions to contend at the grand match held under the auspices of the Royal Club.

Let us now see how the game is played; and first we shall give what is perhaps the earliest description of the game on record, that given by Pennant in his *Tour* in 1792. 'Of all the sports of these parts,' he says, 'that of curling is the favourite, and one unknown in England. It is an amusement of the winter, and played on the ice by sliding from one mark to another great stones of from forty to seventy pounds weight, of a hemispherical form, with an iron or wooden handle at the top. The object of the player is to lay his stone as near the mark as possible, to guard that of his partner, which had been well laid before, or to strike his antagonist's.'

The game is played on a carefully chosen piece of ice called the 'rink,' which should be forty-two yards long, unless special circumstances—such as thaw and consequently 'dull' ice—require it to be shortened. This piece of ice should be as level, smooth, and free from cracks as possible; there is usually a trifling bias, which however to the skilled curler rather adds interest to the game, as it calls forth additional science in the play.

When the rink is chosen, a little mark is made at each end; this is called the 'tee,' and near that point stands, in his turn, each player, whose object is to hurl or slide his stones to the opposite end, by a swinging motion of the arm. Each player also endeavours to place his stones nearer the tee than those of his opponents. In this respect curling is precisely similar in principle to the well-known game of bowls. Round the tees are scratched several concentric circles or 'brougs,' a foot or so apart from each other, by which means the distance at which stones are lying from the goal is seen at a glance at any time during the continuance of the 'end.' In the normally long rink, a scratch called the hog-score—usually made wavy, to distinguish it from any accidental crack—is drawn across the line of play near each end, eight yards from the tee; and any stones that have not had impetus enough imparted to them to carry them over this line are 'hogs,' and are put off the ice as useless for that end. A common number of players in one rink is eight—four against four; but in some places more play on one side, and in others less, according to circumstances. As a general rule each man plays two stones. The game is counted by points; and each stone of a side closer than their antagonists' nearest, is a point which scores towards the game. It will be observed that 'tees,' 'brougs,' and 'hog-scores'

are in duplicate, for as in quoits and bowls, ends are changed after each round.

As in bowls so in curling, the office of 'skip' of each side is usually given to the best player; and on his tact and judgment, besides knowledge of the exact amount of confidence he can place on the skill of each of his followers depends much of the success of his side. His chief duty is to stand at the tee for the purpose of directing and advising the play of each of his fellows, always playing last himself, that the critical shot on which perhaps victory or defeat hangs, may be in the best possible hands. Thus, in a rink of four players a side, the skips stand directors until their third men have played both their stones; upon which they proceed to the other end and play theirs.

The course of a game is generally something like this, though in no sport are there greater variations, or more circumstances calling forth all that judgment, skill, and experience only can teach. The 'lead' or first player's object is simple: he tries to 'draw' his shot—that is, to play his stone up the ice towards the end where stands his skip directing, so that the stone may lie if possible within the rings; and if he is a skillful player, his stone rests say a few feet short of the tee. The lead of the opposite side probably does as nearly the same, or with a little more force applied he perhaps knocks out his opponent's stone and lies in its place. Each of the leads having played two stones, the turn of the second player now comes. If an opposing stone lies near the tee, this player tries to change places with it by driving it away; but if a stone of his own side is next the tee, his play will be to 'guard' it—that is, to lay his own stone in a direct line before it, so that the enemy may be less likely to dislodge it. As the game proceeds it gets more intricate—the stones round the tee may have been so placed that the 'winner' is perfectly guarded from direct attack. Then is the time for the display of science: an experienced player by a cunning twist of the wrist may make his stone curl so as to carry it past the one that is supposed to guard the winning stone; or he may hit a stone near the winner in an oblique direction, and so cannon off it on to the winning stone and knock it away. This last is called 'wicking,' and is exactly a stroke of the same kind so necessary in billiards.

And so the game goes on—a game of give and take; but as Grene says, who can

Follow the experienced player
Through all the mysteries of his art, or teach
The undisciplined how to wick, to guard,
Or ride full out the stone that blocks the pass!

Stories innumerable are told of the delicate feats of aiming performed by enthusiasts of the game; and it is wonderful what skill is often shown in the shots taken by good curlers with their unwieldy looking weapons; the narrow 'ports' or openings between two stones that they can make their missiles pass through, and the dexterity they shew in calculating the bias of the ice and the exact amount of angle necessary to make their cannons. This too, with stones thirty or forty pounds in weight!

Each player provides himself with a broom to sweep up the ice before a too lazy stone; and upon

judicious sweeping much of the game depends. The shouts of 'Scop! scop!' that follow the signal of the skip; the excited gestures of the 'capping combatants'; the constant cries of victory or defeat after the frequent changes of fortune; the general exhilaration of spirits attending a healthy and exciting exercise in the bracing air of winter—all tend to make the scene an extraordinary one. Of course if, instead of the ordinary match or game among the members of a club, we are witnessing a 'bonspiel' or match between two rival clubs or parishes, the excitement is much intensified. Wraps put on by the careful goodwives' hands before the curlers left home are recklessly cast aside; brawny arms vigorously ply the besoms; strong lungs shout out encouragement; and the engrossed combatants await the issue of a shot in all the attitudes so cunningly portrayed in Sir George Harvey's well-known picture. Of course the point of most breathless interest is when perhaps one shot must decide the game. Hear how that inimitable curling song-writer, the Rev. Dr Duncan, describes that moment:

A moment's silence, still as death,
Perceives the anxious thrang, man,
Then sudden bursts the victors' shout,
Wi' hollos loud and lang, man;
Triumphant besoms wave in air,
And friendly banters fly, man;
Whilst, cold and hungry, to the inn
Wi' eager steps they hie, man;

where awaits them the true curlers' dinner of 'beef and greens;' to which simple viands the appetites, sharpened by the keen frost, do ample justice. And if a temperate tumbler of toddy is emptied, what then? A merry evening is spent; and however keen the contest has been, or strong the rivalry between closely matched parishes, we can always say with the old song:

They met baith merry in the morn,
At night they parted friends.

During these jovial evenings, 'in words the fight renewed is fought again,' and many stories of past curling are told—one of which we shall take an early opportunity of offering to our readers.

MUSIC AND POETRY.

Art in its different developments may be said to express one idea—beauty. As in different parts of the world different languages are spoken, which all express the same thoughts and feelings, though in different ways, so all the arts are but the various ways of expressing the one moving spirit, the one idea, which is beauty. Painting exhibits or expresses beauty of colour; Sculpture, beauty of form; Architecture, beauty of proportion; Music, beauty of harmony; Poetry, beauty of thought. Each is in some measure transferable to, or capable of part expression by, the others. Thus painting may exhibit the beauty of form as in sculpture, and architecture may combine the beauties both of painting and sculpture, while poetry can in some measure unite the properties of each art.

The various thoughts and feelings of humanity are capable of being expressed in art, in every branch of it. Joy and sorrow, triumph and despair, can be expressed alike faithfully by music,

painting, or poetry. The pain that is never entirely absent from this painful earth, aches in sculpture, in verse, and in melody; the love that beats in the great heart of the universe, breathes from the canvas, the marble, and the minstrel. Two arts especially are so blended as to be almost synonymous—Music and Poetry. Poetry is inarticulate music, harmony is song without words. Poetry is perhaps the highest of all arts, because all the others appeal to the soul through the external senses; while poetry, without sound, without beauty either of form or colour, unites the power of all. Something of the earth is necessary to the production of the other arts; pigments, marbles, strings, instruments of various sorts are indispensable to all except poetry; therefore poetry is the divine art, for it comes direct from the soul. Exquisite word-painting describes a scene as vividly as any painting; perfect rhythm is the purest harmony, and all art is combined in a poem which depicts with the fidelity of painting, which is symmetrical with the perfect proportions of architecture, and which breathes the melody of music.

From the earliest ages, songs have been the heart-notes of nations; the simplest form of poetry, yet the most popular, because written directly from the heart to the heart. Heroic deeds were celebrated in song, love-stories were immortalised in song, ere there was a note of written music or a word of written verse. Thus the twin-sister arts music and poetry, in their infancy scarce distinguishable, passed on hand in hand; but with the lapse of years they grew more divided, their different features becoming more developed, until now, their triumphs have apparently raised a barrier between them, and people forget that they are twin; but the chord of sympathy is still there. The union is not less; it is only less visible, because more intricate. It is impossible briefly to state all the points where the sister-muses are at one; let us simply, by pointing out a few examples from the great masters of each, attempt to shew that music and poetry are still closely allied.

The three great moving powers of humanity are Faith, Reason, Passion—the Soul, the Head, the Heart. Faith, reverence, worship, or by whatever name may be called that feeling in man which causes him to adore a being greater than himself, has been expressed in poetry by Milton; in music by Handel. Reason, the thoughts of the human mind, the gropings after a true philosophy, has been expressed in the poetry of Shelley, in the music of Mendelssohn. Passion—each varied emotion that throbs in the heart of man, is expressed in the poetry of Byron, in the music of Beethoven. Others might be cited, and resemblances carried to any extent between poets and musicians; but the above may suffice, being not merely fanciful definitions, but thorough truths, fully borne out in fact; not ideal but real.

There is first the poetry and music in which the feeling of worship, the element of religion, is prime agent. Milton can be fairly taken as the poet of reverence. Owing to the peculiar circumstances of his life and times, the great power of his verse is a cry against the follies and sins of a debased people, an earnest cry for more strength of purpose, more firmness of will. It all strives to exalt a Deity who was like to be forgotten by a nation steeped in the vices and frivolities of Cavalier

times. Grand and impressive his verse flows on, a mighty flood, with the hidden strength which shews itself in calm still progress.

Like the full rich notes of the organ sound the words of Milton, as also the noble chorals of Handel, whose music, like Milton's verse, is full of adoration. Strange that both in their later years were blind. Could it be that the closing of the eyes of the flesh opened the eyes of the soul to a clearer vision and a more real conception of the Deity? The majesty of God, the insignificance of man, the eternal triumph of good over evil, are their themes, and in the same tones are they uttered. Handel and Milton sound like one voice, now in tones of beseeching tenderness—*Miserere Domine* wailing forth the plaint of sorrow in accents piteous with the burden of woe; again with righteous indignation they witheringly scathe the enemies of the truth and the spirit of evil; and, in *Gloria in Excelsis* they unite in praising the power of the Deity above all names, the one spirit, the 'I am' of the universe.

From the earliest times until now, man has been trying to solve the riddle of existence, eagerly striving after a true philosophy which shall satisfactorily explain to his reason all the complex mechanism of his nature. The highest intellect has vainly striven to pierce the mysteries of time and eternity, until the torch of reason becomes only an *ignis fatuus*, leading to dangerous wilds, where there is no path. In poetry the pure reason of man has had few such brilliant exponents as Shelley. Gifted with daring imagination, his genius darted in its wild flight like the lightning from out the storm-cloud; far above the earth his spirit seemed to float, while he breathed forth his marvellous song and toyed with the clouds and the spirits of the spheres. Intellect was his god; he revelled in the beauty of Nature and in the mystic shadows of psychological dreams. His eager soul was ever yearning for a something undefined to satisfy the vague longings of a mind that will take nothing for granted, that cannot believe what it does not understand. Therefore the works of Shelley are admirable examples of the poetry of the intellect.

Mendelssohn is his counterpart in music; there is the same vivid imagination, the same perfection of harmony, the same wealth of melody in the works of both. His music displays a rich intellect and a brilliant fancy; in it there is mechanical perfection; there is all that knowledge and education can do; heart only is wanting. His cultured mind conjures up sweet sounds, delicate airy visions, grand solemn strains; but there is never a touch of passion in it all. Carefully polished into perfection, the intricacies of his music convey the idea that a vast amount of effort and labour has been bestowed on their production. But in this he differs from Shelley, for Shelley's song is free, spontaneous as a bird's, and in it there is the fire, the passion which Mendelssohn lacks.

Thus, though there are slight differences in the way in which the intellect is developed in the works of those two masters, yet they both exhibit, above all, the reason, the intellect of man in its highest state of culture. Rich, melodious, dreamy are they both; and each leaves on the listener the same impression as of wandering through a land of perfect loveliness, peopled by beautiful spirits, chanting music now full of exquisite fancies, and

again uttering wild cries for that rest and peace which the intellect alone cannot give. A fairy world is that dream-land of Shelley and of Mendelssohn.

Ever nearer to human nature is the music of the heart, the one thing in the universe that changes not. Intellect with the advancing ages advances and changes; religions vary in different lands; but although languages, manners, everything be different, the heart of man remains the same: 'One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.' Difference of language or of creed is no barrier to the appreciation of Shakspeare, of Mozart, of Raphael. True genius speaks to human nature from the depths of an intensest sympathy, a melody, a thought, which no boundary-line can limit, no distinction of race retard.

How is it that the sublimest music and the most entrancing verse are the results of sorrow? How is it that 'sweetness is wrung out of pain, as the juice is crushed away from the cane?' Out of the fire comes the purified gold, and out of the furnace of trial and pain and sorrow, comes that perfect sympathy which lies at the root of genius. Pain develops faculties which would otherwise lie dormant, and thus out of much suffering grew the deathless song of Byron and the immortal music of Beethoven. Nursed by neglect, fostered by contempt, grew their soul-children into a life which triumphed over the scorn which had slighted their infancy—beautiful soul-children, that shall live for ever in the eternal youth of genius. So long as the heart of humanity shall continue to throb, so long shall continue Byron's verse and Beethoven's harmonies. The heart, with its passionate longings, its hope and despair, its delight and its utter weariness, is embodied in the works of both. Strains of infinite tenderness and burning notes of passionate intensity, go to the heart of the listener with that strange undefinable power—that thrill, which is the charm of Beethoven's music. That composer once remarked that 'music should strike fire from the heart of man, and bring tears from the eyes of woman.' His music has accomplished both. The works of other musicians may delight or astonish; Weber's sweet notes have a home in many hearts, and Mozart's versatile genius has given to dramatic music its highest expression; but we venture to say that none exercises that marvellous fascination, none weaves the spell of enchantment which dwells in the burning notes of the master musician.

And in Byron's poetry there is the same indescribable attraction, because there is the same power. At present it is the fashion to sneer at his magnificent genius, to humble it over the lower, the higher is raised the present school, who write of vague shadowy beings, and are strangely destitute of genuine life or passion. The conventional society of the present time is most fittingly mirrored in the conventional poetry of the day. Anything like tender emotion is carefully concealed. In the poetry of Byron there is no straining after effect, no halting for a word or a metaphor; on, ever on flows the song in a restless tide. His poetry, like that of Burns, is equally gifted brother, is not *made*; it breathes, it burns; and is a genuine creation. In Byron's poetry love and hate are no mere affectations; they are genuinely depicted, and meant; while sorrow is touched with the tender cadence of a

real grief. There beats in all his verse a true throbbing heart, with all the inconsistencies of temperament which belong to human nature. There is the secret of his power, the magic of his verse, which must live so long as hearts shall beat to the tune of love, and there are sorrows in this world of unrest.

The universality of this heart-music is easily understood, even though the intellect of man be ever changing; and each new science in its turn alter the aspect of affairs; each new philosophy seem to overthrow the previous schools. As knowledge becomes more extended, materialism wages a sterner battle against idealism, and a 'reason' that must comprehend all the mysteries of existence, that must apply the crucible to everything, bids fair to abolish 'heart' altogether, as an antiquated emotion; and yet, throughout all ages to come, the one touch of nature will still make 'the whole world kin.'

Unaffected in the main by religion or education, we see the same feelings, with all their varying moods, in the inhabitants of the sunniest climes or of the lands of winter snows. Thus is the heart of man ever the same. True genius speaks to that heart; hence it is universal, and can never die. The language of Homer is now esteemed dead, but is the *Iliad* dead? The land of Dante has been steeped in a long sleep, but has the *Inferno* been forgotten? The birthplace of Michael Angelo is disputed, but none disputes the power of his imperishable marbles.

Bright in the beauty of eternal youth, live the song-notes of genius whether in verse or music; age cannot mar the freshness of their charm; time cannot lessen the power of their fascination. Empires are overthrown, victories lost and won, kingdoms once in the first rank are fallen behind, and young nations are spurring on to the front; the world, ever in a turmoil, is a perpetual kaleidoscope of change; but through the clang of battle these voices sound triumphant, and still to the weary and the suffering they whisper peace and comfort.

THE BELL-RINGER.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—THE DUMB PEAL.

OVER hill and dale, over woodland and moor, over fields and hedgerows, the snow has thrown her mantle of purity, concealing all defects with a skilful hand, and making a landscape of fairy-like beauty, enhanced by the rays of the sun. On the church belonging to the village of Linden, its beauty was strikingly revealed, as it lay upon every moulding, and clothed the ivy clustering the tower, contrasted by patches of dark-green leaves where the wind had relieved them of their snowy burden, and tracing the outline of each narrow pointed window and jutting buttress. The graves were thickly covered with Nature's winding-sheet, and even the mossy tombstones in this village 'Gods-acre' were whitened by the same pure covering, for the wind had ceased for some hours, and a ghostly silence pervaded the resting-place of the dead, until the striking of the village clock in a dull muffled tone warned the occupants of some adjacent cottages that it was four o'clock. Clouds of a light gray colour hung low over the earth,

and Nature reposed in a silence that is often the precursor of a storm.

The village of Linden was situated in a valley, picturesquely green in summer, but subject to heavy snow-drifts in winter, which at times rendered the road nearly impassable; a fact which was painfully apparent to a solitary traveller who was toiling wearily on his way at the time my story opens. As he drew near the churchyard, which was situated at the entrance to the village, he paused to rest on the low wall surrounding the inclosure, and drew his plaid around him, as a protection from the cold, for he shook in every limb, and his breath went and came in short uneven gasps. A labourer returning from his work gave him a countryman's 'good-even,' but he made no reply; an urchin clambered over the stile to take a short cut through the sacred precincts, and stared hard as he brushed past the muffled form; still he moved not, although the fast-deepening gloom of the short December day was sufficient to urge him to hasten to a shelter for the night. At last, as the church clock struck the quarter past four, the stranger rose, and mounting the stile, stepped down into the churchyard. Removing his plaid from his face, he looked earnestly around, without fear that he should challenge recognition; he was alone with the dead. Stumbling with some uncertainty among the graves, he made for a distant corner, where a door in the ivy-covered wall and a neatly kept path (from which the snow had been lately swept) leading to the chancel door, shewed it to be a private entrance to the churchyard. In this corner stood a cross of Scotch granite, decked with wreaths of *immortelles*, and still discernible in the twilight was the inscription:

In Beloved Remembrance of
ALICE, Wife of CHARLES PEREGRINE,
who died August 12, 18—, Aged 52.
Her End was Peace.

With eyes which seemed to strain themselves in his eagerness to read this inscription, the traveller gathered in the meaning of what he read, and with cold benumbed fingers painfully traced each carved letter, to make the dread assurance doubly sure. Claspings the cross, he sank upon his knees, and indulged in an agony of grief; at last his emotion overcame him; the fatigue he had previously endured augmented his suffering; his arms released their hold, and he slid from his kneeling position on to the ground, lying in an unconscious state on the verge of a newly dug grave, side by side with the one over which he had been weeping; and in this dangerous position for a time we leave him.

At a quarter to eight Nathan Boltz, who was master of the belfry, the bells, and the ringers, who rung the curfew at eight o'clock, and the morning bell at five in summer and six in winter, who was sexton and parish clerk, and one of the principal members of the choir, came to perform his usual duty. The tolling of the curfew over, Nathan turned aside to inspect the grave he had lately dug; his astonishment was intense at stumbling over a prostrate form, and but for his activity he would have been precipitated into the narrow house so lately prepared by him. Putting down his lantern, he raised the insensible figure, and bore it in his arms to his cottage, close at hand;

once there he managed to unlock the door, and placed the stranger gently on the floor. Running back swiftly for his lantern, Nathan returned with it, closed and locked his door upon intruders, and brought its light upon the face of his guest. No sooner had he done this than he started back in dismay. He knew the man, although he had not seen him for fifteen years, and time had worked startling changes in that cold impassive face.

'Tis he at last!' whispered Nathan, as if fearful of being overheard, although he was alone. For a moment he felt as David might have felt with Saul sleeping before him; then the passion in his face died out, and he used every means to restore the sufferer. For some time his efforts were in vain, but at last he was successful; and the first glance bestowed upon him by the stranger shewed that he too was recognised, although neither of them spoke.

Nathan was at his post next morning when the funeral cortège came quietly through the grounds surrounding the Hall, and was met by the vicar near the chancel door; but Nathan's mind was preoccupied, and he scarcely heard or saw anything which took place. He went through his duties mechanically, even to filling up the grave in silence, although many lingered near him to speak of her who lay beneath. They thought him strange, but held him in too much respect to venture a remark.

Squire Peregrine of Linden Hall had been a widower only a few months, having been left with seven daughters, who might have been termed the widower's garland. Alas! for that fragile beauty which fading rapidly droops into an early grave. The funeral of one fair girl had just taken place; and for Hilda Peregrine, the bell-ringers would on that evening ring a dumb peal, which should speak to every heart in its sorrow, and prove their sympathy with the bereaved. Six months before, they had rung for the mother, little anticipating the early removal of one of her children; she had passed away from them, beloved to the last. Was it any wonder that the men took their way to the belfry in silence, guided by the light of the lantern flashing on the snow-covered paths? The bell-ringers of Linden could boast of no slight skill in their manipulation of the splendid chime of eight bells which were wont to speak their stirring language to the villages for miles around. The sweet and musical bells of Linden had been a recent gift from the ladies of the Hall, and each bell bore upon it the name of the giver. Nathan Boltz preceded the ringers into the belfry. See him as he stands there divested of his wraps, and revealed by the light of candles burning in sconces fixed in the wall. He is a tall and stalwart man of thirty-five, with a muscular development rarely excelled, inherited from his father, a Dutch sailor. His face, of a true Saxon type, is remarkable for its repose and force of expression; firmness without obstinacy in the mouth and chin; benevolence written on the expansive forehead; forgiveness and charity in the clear dark gray eye.

Nathan Boltz was truly one of Nature's gentlemen; a self-educated man, a great reader, a deep thinker, a humble imitator of the Divine Master. This was the man who, unaware of his true greatness, lived a life of real enjoyment in zealously performing his duties and working for his daily bread. He had no desire to extend his sphere

beyond his native village; the simple drama of his life had been played out amidst its rural scenes, and it had not been destitute of pathos and variation. Nathan had had a deep sorrow, which had washed his soul in its tumultuous waters and left it stranded upon the Rock of Ages; and when the memory of this sorrow came upon him, his voice took a deeper tone in the chants and hymns, and a shadow would obscure the brightness of his face. He had, like all his fellow-creatures, many faults; but the good in him outbalanced the evil.

'Now!' cried Nathan. Instantly the men were at their posts. Every hand grasped its respective rope; and there echoed forth on the night-air the solemn far-sounding peal, carrying the melody down to earth, catching it and bearing it to heaven above.

Hark to their dull unchanging roll!

As heavily on it floats,

And speaks of the dead to the mourner's soul
With its wildly solemn notes.

The cottagers opened their doors, and every heart answered its response of regret and hope as the bells rang on. At last it was over; the solemn sound died gradually away, and the silence which followed seemed the more expressive from the contrast.

Old Father Time rings many changes; hour by hour and day by day they steal upon us, imperceptibly but surely; and we mark their advent but slightly, until at our yearly gatherings, when friend meets friend and long-separated faces are reunited, the missing links shew many a vacant chair, and faces filled with joy in meeting their beloved once more, ever and anon cloud over, as memory recalls departed joys which never can return.

We return with the mourners to the Hall, where the sisters can scarcely realise the loss of her who has so lately been taken from them. Patricia, the eldest, possesses her father's hauteur of disposition and commanding manner. Gertrude, the second, resembles her mother in person and disposition. Of the four younger sisters, two of them were twins, and were a counterpart of their elder sister. The remaining two had been trained by her whom they lamented, and were, like her, beloved by all who knew them. The sisters sat together in the drawing-room, awaiting the entrance of their father and another member of the family regarded in the light of a son—their cousin, Oliver Peregrine, whose marriage with Patricia was necessarily delayed by her sister Hilda's death. These constituted the family dinner-party.

Oliver Peregrine grew impatient at the decorous silence preserved by his uncle, who in spite of his calm demeanour, was feeling the death of this daughter more than he cared to shew. The servants who waited had felt real affection for her, and their sorrow was not an outward form. But the delay of the marriage chafed Oliver's temper, and with difficulty he responded to his uncle's desire that all mention of it might be for the present suppressed. Let us describe him. He was about forty years of age; tall, thin, and stooping; his hair and moustache of a faint sandy blue, his light-blue eyes uncertain and cruel-looking, the mouth thin and compressed; haughty towards his dependents, possessing an unblemished reputation, heir to the

greater part of his uncle's wealth, demanding respect, of love gaining none. He was a man who looked suspiciously on every action of those around him, at the same time given to concealment himself. He was an accomplished scholar, and had been educated for a learned profession, being the orphan son of a younger brother; but as the heir of Squire Peregrine, he followed his studies as a recreation, and spent most of his time at the Hall.

Dinner was proceeding in the manner just described, when up the snow-covered avenue a carriage rolled silently and swiftly; and presently the butler handed a card to his master. Squire Peregrine rose immediately; and all felt the interruption a welcome one. 'My old friend Colonel Lindsay,' he said in explanation, 'whom I have not seen for many years.—Come with me, Patricia, and bid him welcome.'

They left the room; and after a short interval returned, bringing Colonel Lindsay with them. Introductions followed, and he took his seat at the table. No one present made mention of the time which had elapsed since last he had visited them. Many changes of a painful character had taken place during the interval, and the Colonel avoided all mention of them until he found himself alone with his old friend. But when Patricia and her sisters had left the dining-room, and Oliver with a slight apology had followed them, the Colonel, in a few feeling words, referred to the death of Squire Peregrine's wife and daughter; then suddenly changing his tone, he added: 'And where is the boy? Where is Bertram?'

Squire Peregrine's face grew of an ashen paleness, as in a low voice he answered: 'Lindsay, I have no son.'

'Dead?' said the Colonel in a penetrating tone, as if he would read the heart of his old friend.

'To me and my family for ever. Name him no more!'

The Colonel took no notice of his tone. 'His faults?' he pressed—'his faults?'

No one else would have so dared to interrogate Squire Peregrine; yet again he answered: 'Abduction and forgery; and his old friend noticed that he placed the word forgery last.

'I do not believe it, Charles,' he said calmly. 'Against whom were these crimes committed? Against a pure and innocent village girl, and against myself. He died, and all I could do was to try not to discover him. The girl is dead. To the last she shielded him. He is the first Peregrine who has so fallen, and his name is cut off from amongst us. God grant he may be dead!'

'He is innocent!' returned the Colonel in a firm tone.

Squire Peregrine stared at him as if he thought him mad. 'How can you prove that?' he said hurriedly.

'I have no proof but my remembrance of him as a lad, and an inward conviction that you have been deceived. Did his mother believe him guilty?'

'I cannot say. I did not allow her to mention him. My two youngest daughters are not aware they have a brother.'

The Colonel did not press the matter further, but changed the subject, relating incidents of his life abroad, and making the time pass pleasantly to his old friend. But that night the Colonel sat in deep thought over the decaying embers of his fire, and

had come to a resolution before he sought his couch. The result was that Dobson the butler furnished him with full particulars of the sad event; and unknown to Oliver Peregrine the prosperity of that worthy was on the wane.

EXPERIENCES IN CAMP AND COURT.

AN interesting and gossiping volume of personal reminiscences, entitled *Camp, Court, and Siege: a Narrative of Personal Adventure and Observation during two Wars, 1861-65, 1870-71* (Sampson Low & Co.), has been given to the world by Colonel Hoffman, an officer whose position during two great wars enabled him to record much that escaped the notice of other observers. Colonel Hoffman held an important post in the Federal army during the American civil war, and at its close received an appointment in the diplomatic service of his country. As Secretary to the American Legation in Paris, and *chargé d'affaires* during the temporary absence of the United States minister, Mr Washburne, he witnessed the events which preceded the Franco-German war, and afterwards remained in Paris, in common with other members of his Embassy, during the siege. The recollections he has strung together relate rather to the byways than to the beaten track of history during these periods; and it is this fact which gives his unpretending volume its chief interest and novelty. Our readers will probably be amused in spending with us a short time over its pages.

Colonel Hoffman was in 1862 captain on the staff of Brigadier-general Williams at Hatteras, an island which lies in the direct route of vessels bound from the West Indies to Baltimore, New York, &c. The 'guileless natives' of this place are, we are informed, well known as wreckers, and in pursuit of this calling they adopt a plan which is simple but effective. A half-wild kind of horse called a 'marsh pony,' is bred upon the island, and one of these animals is caught, one of its legs is tied up, a lantern slung to its neck, and the pony is thus driven along the beach on a stormy night. The effect is just that of a vessel riding at anchor; but other ships approaching are soon made unpleasantly aware of the difference between a merchantman riding out the gale, and this Hatteras decoy.

From Hatteras, Captain Hoffman was ordered to join General Butler's expedition to New Orleans, and proceeded in a vessel which took three regiments, numbering three thousand souls. A fact which transpired on the voyage he comments to the attention of those parish authorities in England who refuse to enforce the Vaccination Act. A man who had been ill with small-pox, but was supposed to be cured, was on board this vessel, and two days after they had sailed his disease broke out again. The men among whom he lay were packed as close as herrings in a barrel, yet only one took it. They had all been vaccinated within sixty days.

Ship Island, off Mobile in the Gulf of Mexico, was their first destination to await supplies for the expedition. An odd thing here was the abundance of fresh water obtainable everywhere by digging a hole two feet deep in the sand; in two hours it became full, but after using it for a week the water would be found brackish, when all that was necessary to procure another supply was to

dig a hole as before. And yet the island scarcely rises five feet above the sea. While staying at this place the writer witnessed a curious freak of lightning. Eight prisoners were sleeping side by side in a circular tent, when a terrible thunder-storm broke out. The sentry stood leaning against the tent-pole, with the butt of his musket on the ground and the bayonet touching his shoulder. The lightning struck the tent-pole, leaped to the bayonet and tore the stock to splinters, but only slightly stunned the sentry; thence it passed along the ground and struck the first prisoner, killing him; glided by the six inside men without injury to them, but struck and killed the eighth man as it disappeared.

We now come to the writer's reminiscences of warfare.

A characteristic anecdote is told of General Sherman's coolness. 'He had a pleasant way of riding up in full sight of the enemy's batteries accompanied by his staff. Here he held us while he criticised the manner in which the enemy got his guns ready to open on us. Presently a shell would whiz over our heads, followed by another somewhat nearer. Sherman would then quietly remark: "They are getting the range now; you had better scatter." As a rule we did not wait for a second order.' On one occasion Sherman sent out a strong party to reconnoitre, and Captain Hoffman asked permission to accompany them. It was given; and the general added: 'By the way, captain, when you are over there, just ride up and draw their fire, and see where their guns are. They won't hit you.' The order was obeyed, and Hoffman was not hit; but he does not recommend the experiment to his friends.

There are occasionally amenities in warfare, and imbittered as was the conflict between North and South, still some curious instances occurred. At the siege of Fort Hudson the soldiers on both sides established a sort of *entente cordiale*. Growing weary of trying to pick each other off through loopholes, one would tie a white handkerchief to his bayonet and wave it above the parapet; and presently a similar signal would be made on the other side. This meant a truce; and in a moment the men would swarm out on both sides, and commence chaffing each other. After a while some one would cry out: 'Get under cover now, Johnnie,' or 'Look out now, Yank; we are going to fire,' when handkerchiefs would be lowered and hostilities recommence. No one dared to violate this tacit truce without notice; but had any one done so, his comrades would have roughly handled him.

A striking instance is noted of the effect produced by the imagination when exalted by the excitement of battle. A staff-officer by Captain Hoffman's side dropped his bridle, threw up his arms, and said: 'I am hit; my boot is full of blood.' He was helped from his horse, and sent to the ambulance, the captain mentally wishing him farewell. Next day he appeared at headquarters as well as ever; he had been struck by a spent ball, which had broken the skin, but inflicted no serious injury. Captain Hoffman saw the same effect produced on another occasion. A man limped from the field supported by two others, and said his leg was broken. He was pale as death, and had the chaplain to read to him; but the surgeon was surprised to find no hole in his stocking, and cutting it off, nothing was discernible but

a black-and-blue mark on the leg. Men notoriously brave may thus occasionally be imposed upon by their imagination.

Woman's wit, in the opinion of Colonel Hoffman, played an important part at times in the conflict, the 'rebels' gaining many an advantage over the Northern men by its influence. 'In such matters,' he remarks, 'one woman is worth a wilderness of men. I recollect one day we sent a steam-boat full of rebel officers (exchanged prisoners) into the Confederacy. They were generally accompanied by their wives and children. Our officers noticed the most extraordinary number of dolls on board—every child had a doll—but they had no suspicions. A lady told me afterwards that every doll was filled with quinine; the sawdust was taken out, and quinine substituted. Depend upon it that female wit devised that trick.'

Woman's ingenuity also displayed itself in other ways. A bag of intercepted letters from the Confederate side gave an instance. A Southern young lady, writing to her brother-in-law in Mobile, narrated how she had successfully played a trick upon a Boston newspaper, compelling it to unwittingly beland its fogs. She sent them a poem called *The Gypsy's Wassail*, the original in Sanscrit, with a translation in English, expressing every patriotic and loyal sentiment. The 'Sanscrit' was simply English written backward, and properly adjusted, read as follows:

God bless our brave Confederates, Lord!
Lee, Johnson, Smith, and Beauregard!
Help Jackson, Smith, and Johnson Joe
To give them fits in Dixie, oh!

The *Wassail* was published with a compliment to the 'talented contributor'; but in a few days the trick was discovered and exposed.

We pass on to the writer's European recollections. He received his appointment to the Legation at Paris in 1866, when the imperial court was at the height of its splendour. The Emperor, when he designed to be, was always happy in his reception of diplomats, and the formal introductory speeches were followed by informal conversations. He liked to ventilate his English, but could not speak the language perfectly. To an American officer (Colonel Hay) he observed, for instance: 'You have made no war in the United States?' (*Vous avez fait la guerre?*)—meaning, 'Did you serve?' The colonel was strongly tempted to tell his Majesty it was not he made the war, but Jeff Davis. The Empress spoke English not so fluently as the Emperor, but with less accent. American ladies were always well received by her, and her balls were sometimes called by the envious *bals américains*. If the Embassy desired one or two presentations beyond the usual number, the inquiry was generally made: 'Is it a young and pretty woman?' and if it were, there was no difficulty, for the Empress was pleased to have her balls set off by beautiful and well-dressed women.

Comparison is favourable we are told, in American eyes, to British over the French imperial display on a very important occasion—the opening of parliament by the sovereign, as contrasted with that of the Corps Législatif. The spectacle in this country bears the palm, says Colonel Hoffman, both in splendour and interest. Her Majesty's demeanour is much admired. 'Short and stout as is the Queen, she has the most graceful and stately

walk perhaps in Europe. It is a treat to see her move.' The Empress of the French, however, created great enthusiasm on these occasions. 'Her beauty, her grace, and her stately bearing carried the enthusiasm to its height. You would have sworn that every man there was ready to die for his sovereign. Within less than four years she sought in vain for one of them to stand by her in her hour of danger.'

In the year of the last Paris Exhibition (1867), Napoleon III. entertained in his capital the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, the latter accompanied by Bismarck and Moltke. Sixty thousand men passed before the sovereigns in review, and it was on the return from the spectacle that the Emperor Alexander was shot at by a Pole. The ball struck the horse of one of the equestries, and blood spurted from the animal upon the Emperor's second son, who was with him in the carriage. It was reported that the Emperor of the French turned to his imperial guest and said: 'Sir, we have been under fire together for the first time to-day.' To which the Emperor replied with much solemnity of manner: 'Sir, we are in the hands of Providence.' That evening the writer saw the Russian Emperor at a ball at his own Embassy, not more than two hundred persons being present. He looked pale and *distracted*, and Madame Hauemann, wife of the celebrated baron, was trying, but without much tact, to make conversation with him. 'He looked over her head, as if he did not see her, and finally turned upon his heel and left her. It was not perhaps polite, but it was very natural. The Emperor and Empress of the French made extraordinary exertions to enliven the ball; but there was a perceptible oppression in the air.' The would-be assassin was not condemned to death, the jury finding 'extenuating circumstances.'

On the outbreak of war in 1870, the American Legation was requested to undertake the protection of North German subjects in France, and procured the consent of the French government thereto. Thirteen distinct nationalities, European and South American, eventually came under the same protection, and caused plenty of employment. Partly on this account, when the representatives of the great European powers had left Paris for Tours, after the downfall of the Empire, the United States Legation remained, and its members endured the unpleasant experiences of the siege. To Colonel Hoffman, however, the anticipation of this was a matter of perfect indifference—or rather he looked forward to it with some degree of liking. 'I had quite a curiosity to be a besieged. I had been a besieger at Port Hudson, and thought that I would like to experience the other sensation. The sensation is not an unpleasant one, especially in a city like Paris. If you have been overworked or harassed, the relief is very great. There is a calm or sort of Sunday rest about it that is quite delightful. In my experience, the life of the besieged is altogether the most comfortable of the two.' And the writer professes to think that the suffering endured in famous sieges, and the heroism of the inhabitants, have been much exaggerated. There were, however, many points of considerable difference between the circumstances attendant upon the siege of Paris and that, say, of Saragossa or Plevna. The Germans never made a bom-

bardment in earnest. 'We were being bombarded, but after a very mild fashion. I have since talked with a German general who commanded at the quarter where most of the shells entered the city. He assured me that there never was the slightest intention to bombard Paris. If there had been, it would have been done in a very different style.' But shells fell during nineteen days into the city, and nearly two hundred people were killed by the explosions. In both bombardments, that by the Germans and afterwards by the French government troops, much of the mischief done is reported to have been caused by the mere wantonness of the artillerymen, who under such circumstances are eager to hit something, it matters little what it may be. Indifference acts also on the side of the besieged, and during the worst of the bombardment, men and boys were to be seen lurking in the Champs Elysées near the Arch, and darting to secure the fragments of an exploded shell while they were still too hot to hold, or crying *Obus!* and suddenly squatting, to watch the effect upon elderly gentlemen passing by. A large business was done in these fragments as relics after the siege.

As regards provisions, the members of the Legation were of course as well off as it was possible to be under the circumstances. The staple diet, however, which Mr Washburne and the Secretary preferred to expensive luxuries, was 'our national pork and beans, and the poetic fish-ball.' Occasionally they indulged in small portions of elephant, yak, camel, reindeer, porcupine, &c., at an average rate of four dollars a pound. This meat came from the Jardin d'Acclimation, where it was found impossible to get food for the animals. Colonel Hoffman gives the preference among these varieties of flesh to that of the reindeer, which resembles venison, but he thinks all these meats but poor substitutes for beef and mutton. Horse-flesh was the main stay of the population in the way of fresh meat; it was rationed and sold by the government at reasonable prices, nine and a half ounces per day being allowed to each adult. It is 'poor stuff at best,' says the writer. 'It has a sweet, sickening flavour. The only way I found it eatable was as mince mixed with potato.'

The transmission and receipt of intelligence gave rise to some of the most memorable experiences of the siege, and what was done by balloons and pigeons is likely to form a precedent for similar episodes in all time. The French had always a fancy for ballooning, and were probably in advance of the rest of the world in this respect. They soon started a service of mail-balloons twice a week from Paris, despatching them at first in the afternoon; but it was found that they did not rise quickly enough to escape Prussian bullets, and the hour of departure was therefore changed to one in the morning. The speed of the balloons was sometimes marvellous. One descended in Norway on the very morning it left Paris. Another fell into the sea off the coast of Holland a few hours after its departure, and the passengers were rescued by a fishing-smack. Out of ninety-seven balloons despatched, ninety-four arrived safely—about the proportion, says Colonel Hoffman, of railway trains in these later times. Two fell into the hands of the enemy, and one was supposed to have been drifted out to sea and lost. A balloon was seen off Eddystone Lighthouse; and a few

days afterwards a gentleman spending the winter at Torquay received a letter from the rector at Land's End, stating that a number of letters had drifted ashore, supposed to have been lost from a balloon, and among them was one addressed to him. It proved to be a balloon-letter from Colonel Hoffman, and is still preserved as a souvenir of the siege—and the sea. The pigeon experiment Colonel Hoffman considers proved a failure, as so few birds succeeded in reaching their destination. Two or three times, however, a carrier arrived safely, bringing with it one of those marvels of scientific skill, which under the microscope revealed correspondence equal to the contents of a good-sized newspaper.

Not nearly sufficient, in the writer's opinion, was done in the way of sorties from Paris. He contends that the garrison should have made a sortie every night, with sometimes a thousand and sometimes a hundred thousand men. 'Had they done so,' he says, 'they would have soon worn out the Germans with constant *alertes*, and with comparatively little fatigue to themselves. But the entire French army was in want of organisation.' On the other hand, the members of the naval service have Colonel Hoffman's warmest admiration. 'The officers,' he says, 'are a very superior class of men, and the sailors under them fought gallantly during the war, for there was a large number of them detailed to the army. They felt strongly the deterioration of the sister-service.' The colonel was once dining at a Versailles restaurant near a French naval officer, when one of the army, accompanied by two non-commissioned officers, entered and made a great disturbance. '*Cette pauvre armée française! cette pauvre armée française!*' muttered the naval officer.

SHAMROCK LEAVES.

BEGGARS.

THE poorhouse and the policeman have considerably abated Irish mendicants, especially in the towns; but in the country and in remote places, 'the long-remembered beggar' is still an institution. The workhouse is held in abhorrence by this class of vagrant, and any amount of suffering is preferred to the confinement, the enforced cleanliness, and the discipline it involves. The Irish poor are, as a rule, indifferent to creature comforts. They love their liberty under hedge and open sky; and resemble the dog in the fable, who preferred his precarious bone and freedom to the good feeding and luxuries of his tied-up friend. A wretched old woman, decrepit and barefoot, appearing on the hall-door steps of a house she was in the habit of visiting, would be remonstrated with in vain by her patrons, however delicately the obnoxious subject, the poorhouse, was approached.

'Now, Biddy, it is all very well in summer to go about; but in this bitter wintry weather, would it not be better to go where you would have a good bed and shelter, and be warmed and fed and comfortably clothed, instead of shivering about, ragged and hungry? Why not try—only for a while, you know, till summer comes back—why not try the poorhouse?'

'The poorhouse!' (firing up); 'I'd rather die than go there! I'd rather lie down under the snow at the side of the road and die! But sure the neighbours will help me. There isn't one 'ill refuse me an air of the fire or a night's lodging, or maybe a bit and sup of an odd time. And you're going to give me something yourself, my lady, avourneen, you are! Don't I see it in yer face? You're going to bring out the dust of dry tay and the grain of sugar and the couple o' coppers to the poor old granny. Ah yes! And maybe the servant-maids will have an old cast petticoat to throw to her, for to keep the life in her old carcase this perishing day.'

Before the famine of 1846-7, which brought about a change in the food of the peasantry, systematic begging was the annual custom. Potatoes were then the sole food of the working-classes, and the farmers paid their labourers by allowances of potato-ground (half or quarter acres), with seed to till it. Money, therefore, was little in circulation among the lower orders. In the interval between the consumption of the old potatoes and the coming in of the new—expressively known as 'the bitter six weeks'—there were occasionally great privation and distress. Whole families turning out of their cabin and leaving it with locked door, might at this time be seen trooping along the roads—the father away 'harvesting' or getting work where he could. As they went along, stopping at every cabin on their route, a few potatoes would be handed to them—less or more, according as the stock of the donors was holding out—so that by nightfall the bag on the mother's back would have increased to sufficient proportions to furnish a good meal for the family. And thus they continued to live until the new potatoes were fit to dig, when the cabin-door was unlocked, and plenty once more the order of the day.

The charity of the poor to the poor is very touching, and nowhere do we see more of this than in Ireland. The people are naturally good-natured and full of kindly impulses; and they attach moreover, a superstitious, almost religious value to the blessing of the poor, with an equal dread of their curse.

A fatal instance of the latter feeling occurred near Limerick some years since.

A young man fell in love with a girl who did not return his affection; telling him plainly that it was useless to persevere, as she never could care for him. He took his disappointment so much to heart that he fled the country and went off to America.

Maddened with rage and despair at the loss of her only son—the darling of her heart and her sole support, for she was a widow—the bereaved mother went straight from the ship that took away her boy, to the young woman's house. Kneeling down on the threshold, and stretching her arms to heaven with frantic gesticulation, she called down its vengeance upon her trembling hearer, pouring forth a torrent of imprecations upon her head.

By the broken heart of her son—by the widow's hearth made desolate—by the days and nights of lonely misery before her, she cursed the girl! And the latter, appalled by her bitter eloquence, and superstitiously convinced that those awful curses would 'cleave to her like a garment,' never rallied from the terror and the shock to her nerves of this vindictive outbreak. She went into a decline, haunted by the woman's dreadful words; and her death confirmed the popular belief.

To return to our subject. Although the use of Indian meal and griddle-bread as articles of food in place of the exclusive potato, together with increased wages and the payment of labour in cash instead of kind, have abolished the annual begging migrations, mendicants still abound. The tourist season brings them out, as numerous as the flies in summer, and equally troublesome. A party of English clergymen visiting Killarney were pestered, as most travellers are there, by beggars. These reverend gentlemen had, for greater convenience, adopted the usual tourist costume, with the exception of one who belonged to the ultra High Church party, and retained his clerical garb in all its strictness. His dress caused him to be mistaken by the peasantry wherever he went for a Roman Catholic priest; and he was not a little startled when, in Tralee, a girl flung herself down on her knees before him in the muddy street to ask his blessing. The abject obeisance of the people to their priests in those days, was an unaccustomed sight to an English clergyman.

The traveller in question soon became accustomed to the position, and used it for the benefit of his party. Tormented on one occasion by the importunities of a crowd of beggars who followed them, he suddenly stopped. Drawing a line across the road with his stick, he cried to the clamorous troop: 'Pass that mark, and the curse of the priest will be upon you!' All fled in a moment!

Another time the same individual utilised the mistake in the cause of humanity. The party were travelling on a jaunting-car, and going up a steep hill, the driver was flogging his horse unmercifully.

'My friend,' said the clergyman, addressing the man, 'do you know what will happen to you, if you do that—when you go to the next world?'

'O no, yer Reverence. And sure how could I?—What is it now?' pulling off his hat and looking greatly frightened.

'You will be turned into a horse, and devils will be employed to flog you, just as you're flogging now that poor beast of yours.'

'Ah, don't, yer Reverence—don't say that now! for the love of heaven, sir, don't! An' I'll promise on my two knees to give him the best of thratement from this out, and never to lay whip into him that way again.'

The beggars in towns are often very caustic in their remarks, and indulge in personalities more witty than polite, when unsuccessful in their demands.

A late well-known Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, remarkable for a peculiarly shaped and very ugly nose, resisting the importunities of a woman for 'a ha'penny for the honour of the blessed Vargin,' she turned upon him with: 'The Lord forgive you! And that He may presave yer eyesight, I pray; for fair 'tis yerself has the bad nose for spectacles.'

Another spiteful old beldam of the same stamp attacked Sir A. B. for alms, following him down the whole length of Sackville Street. The baronet had tender feet, which with other uncomely infirmities, caused his gait to be none of the most graceful.

'Ye won't give it—won't ye?' broke out the woman in an angry whine. 'O thin, God help the poor! And look now; if yer heart was as soft as yer feet, it wouldn't be in vain we'd be axing yer charity this day.'

'That the "grace of God" may never enter into your house but on parchment!' was the terse and bitter anathema in which another gave vent to her wrathful disappointment. She knew that all writs are on parchment, and had probably learned from cruel experience the formula with which they commence: 'Victoria, by the grace of God, Queen, &c.'

The ingenious proceedings of Captain C—— touching the mendicant fraternity, should not be omitted while on the subject.

When about to be quartered with his men in Mullingar, a friend told him before going there that the place was infested with beggars; and that his predecessor, the commanding officer of the last troop, had been greatly annoyed by them. The captain listened attentively, resolving to take his measures. On the night of his arrival at the hotel he called up the waiter.

'I am informed,' he said, 'that you have a great many beggars in this town.'

'Well, yes, sir; we certainly have,' replied the waiter.

'I wish to see them all—all collected together under the windows of this hotel. Do you think that could be managed?'

'If you wish it, sir. O yes; certainly, sir,' said the man, with the usual waiter-like readiness to promise everything under the sun; albeit a little taken aback at so unusual a request.

'Very well; let them be all here to-morrow at twelve o'clock precisely.'

Such a motley assemblage of rags and wretchedness as presented itself under the hotel windows next day was seldom seen. The tidings had spread like wild-fire; and from every lane and alley of the town came crowding in the blind, the lame, the maimed, the aged—beggary, deformity, idiocy, and idleness in all their varieties. Curiosity and greed were equally on the *qui vive*, and the excitement of the eager crowd may be imagined.

At length the captain appeared on the balcony. There was a breathless silence.

'Are you all here,' he said, 'every one?'

'Every mother's sowl of us, please your honour, barring Blind Bess with her crippled son, and the General.'

'Then call Blind Bess and the General,' said the captain. 'I want you all.'

'Sure enough, here's Bess,' cried a voice, as a double-barrelled mendicant in the shape of a blind

woman with a sturdy cripple strapped on her shoulders, came hurrying up.

'And here's the General driving like mad up the street. But sure yer honour won't give *him* anything—a gentleman that keeps his carriage!' shouted a wag in the crowd.

A dilapidated old hand-cart dragged by a girl now made its appearance. It was covered at top with a piece of tattered oil-cloth, and from a hole cut in the middle of this protruded the head of 'the General,' decked with the remains of an old cocked-hat. The shrivelled face of the old cripple was half covered with a grizzly beard, and his rheumy eyes peered helplessly about in a feeble stare.

'Now,' said the captain, 'ladies and gentlemen'—A murmur in the crowd, especially among the feminine portion.

'Ah thin, bless his darlin' face; 'tis he that has the civil tongue in him, and knows how to spake to the poor!'

'Not a bit o' pride in him; no more than in the babby unborn!'

'Sure any one to look at him would know he was good! Isn't it wrote upon his features?'

'No nagur [niggard] like the one was here before him, that never gave a poor man as much as a dog would keep in his fist.'

'Ladies and gentlemen—you are, I am told, all here assembled. I have requested your attendance in order to state that I have given, for your benefit, one pound to the parson, and one pound to the priest of the parish; and further to inform you, that during my stay in Mullingar, not a single farthing beyond these sums will I bestow on any one of you!'

A howl of disappointment rose from the listeners. The captain did not wait to note the effect of his words. He disappeared into his room in time to be out of reach of the chorus of abuse with which—their first surprise over—his speech was received by his enraged audience.

WOODCOCK GOSSIP.

FROM a recent number of that entertaining journal of sports and pastimes, *Land and Water*, we take the following account of the curious habits of the woodcock.

'Probably no kind of game is more keenly sought after in this country than this, the head of the Snipe family; and we will undertake to say that many an ardent gunner, who has become aware that some of these birds of passage have already reached our shores, will keep a more than usual sharp look-out for "cock" when beating up his coverts for pheasants and such-like perennial game. It is astonishing what a fillip to the day's sport a single woodcock added to the bag will give. Row after row of cock-pheasants, noble in proportions, and in their really beautifully variegated plumage, may be laid out with other game on the lawn at the evening count-up, and the host may proudly scan these evidences of the prowess of himself and his guests and the excellence of his preserves; but his eye will always seek its goal in that little russet-coloured bird, the only representative of his species, amongst the other spoils of the

chase. The man too who has been lucky enough to have shot him, no matter how indifferently he has behaved at those occasional "rocketers" that have presented themselves to him during the day, is regarded as the hero of the party. The reasons why this annual visitant has such distinguished attention paid him, and always such a warm welcome awaiting his arrival, are that, compared with other game, he is scarce, peculiar, inconsistent in his habits, difficult to shoot, and last, but not least, unsurpassed by any, and equalled by few other birds that fly in these islands, as a gastronomic delicacy. There are very few places in England where even in the most favourable seasons woodcock are found in sufficient numbers to warrant shooting expeditions being organised purposely for their pursuit, but they are generally taken with the rest, extra vigilance being observed in beating out all likely localities. The first immigration of the woodcock from the continent generally takes place some time in October, when he will be generally found near the coast for some few days after landing. He is purely a winter visitant and nocturnal, and arrives in England with an easterly wind, and by the light of the moon or in the early dawn. If the elements are unfavourable to his flight, or he is too weak to accomplish the whole journey without a rest, he drops wherever he can find a rock or an island in his course. Lighthouse keepers sometimes find him dead on the lantern, and occasionally, on Landy Island, woodcocks are found in considerable numbers, thin and weak, and but the shadow of what they will be a few days after their arrival at their favourite boring-grounds. During migration-time the inhabitants used to set nets from house to house in the street of Heligoland to trap them, and probably do so now.

As soon as they have recovered strength enough after landing they disperse, and take up their quarters generally in the neighbourhood of springs and soft boggy grounds, but there is no dependence to be placed on their movements. A dozen may be seen in one covert to-day, while to-morrow not a single bird can be found in the whole district. To-day they are flushed amongst the heather on the hill-sides; to-morrow in the deepest and most thickly-wooded dells, or under the hollies and laurels in the home-covert drives. To describe the personal appearance of this confirmed rover is not necessary, as his long beak, bright eye, *ête carrie*, old-oak coloured body, and his black-and-white tipped tail, are well known, and although there are occasionally found specimens somewhat differing in colour and size, one may live in an ordinary cocking district for twenty years and never meet with one of these variations in the colour of his coat, although some very much varying in proportions from their fellows may be killed in the same district every season.

His peculiarities may perhaps be worth notice. His wings are each provided with a little symmetrical, pointed feather, found at the extremity of what is known as the bastard wing, which feather was many years ago sought after by miniature-painters for mounting to use as a brush in the exercise of their art. The ear is a curious

structure, is as proportionately large as that of the owl, and is situated at the extremity of the gape of the beak. The eyeball is enormous, and together with the ear, occupies nearly all the external space on either side of the head. The sexes are almost undistinguishable by external marks, although some naturalists affirm that the outermost feather in the wing of the hen-bird, presents a stripe of white on the exterior veil, which in that of the cock-bird is regularly spotted with black; this is a very fine distinction, and not always to be depended on. Another criterion is the size, which offers a peculiarity in that the hen is generally the larger bird. Woodcock are great gluttons, and to this fact we think it very probable their solitariness is partly attributable. Like a goose to a Cornishman—Cornishmen are reputed heavy feeders—one boring-ground may be enough for one woodcock, but is "starvation for two." Recognising this fact, apparently our long-billed friends do not usurp each other's feeding-ground, having probably an instinctive knowledge that the tenant in possession can find sufficient accommodation for the verniform portions of life to be found therein. Hence a feeding-ground seldom yields more than one woodcock, although when that one is shot its place is very commonly found occupied by another the next day. Where the latter came from, or why it did not jointly occupy with the former tenant—except for the reason adduced above—is a mystery.

The manner of flight of a woodcock when flushed is very irregular. Sometimes he will flap lazily down a ride in front of you like an old red owl startled from his noonday sleep and stupefied by the glare of the sun. At other times he will rise and dart about and zigzag amongst the stems of the trees with a velocity scarcely creditable after witnessing an example of one of the owl-like flights previously mentioned. When he indulges in his twisting and darting tricks, he is a wonderfully easy bird to miss. Sometimes he will fly off slowly for a short distance, turn sharply to the right or left behind a tree, bush, hedge, or other object, dart swiftly onwards for fifty yards or so, and suddenly drop, or perhaps, as if receiving a new impetus from his sudden change of direction, speed away to some far-distant shelter. In covert, however, a woodcock's ulterior point, whatever peculiarities of flight he may indulge in on being flushed, is generally the first opening between the tree-tops; when shooting, therefore, as a general rule fire at the first glimpse, no matter how near he is—for the chances are it is the only sight of him you will obtain—and hold the second barrel ready for the aforesaid opening, through which, if you keep a sharp look-out, you may see him dart.

A TRIUMPH OF ART.

On the Peacock island in Potsdam we find amongst the white marble statues an image of Rachel, the celebrated French tragedian, placed there in memory of her triumph over a monarch who had been by no means friendly disposed towards her. We mean Nicholas, Emperor of Russia, whose dislike to her had been caused by her republican sympathies and turbulent sentiments, which he abhorred, and on account of which he had prohibited her entrance into Russia; he is even

known to have said that he wished never to set eyes on her. This inclement verdict of the powerful monarch was no small stumbling-block in the great tragedian's way, for Russia is a mine of gold; foreign artists and many a Rachel and Patti of our days might relate wonderful, almost fabulous tales of costly gems raining down upon them on the stage amid the enthusiastic cheers of an enchanted audience.

Therefore Mademoiselle Rachel was highly pleased when in the summer of 1852 she received an invitation to act before the court at Potsdam, where the Emperor Nicholas was just then staying as the king of Prussia's guest. The famous actress had been desired to recite several scenes from French plays, but neither in costume nor in company of other actors. She therefore arrived attired in black, the most costly lace covering her beautiful arms and shoulders; but the gentleman who, by the king's orders, was at the station to receive her, expressed his doubts whether the royal and imperial party would not object to so melancholy and mournful an apparel; and on reaching the palace, the artist was kindly invited by the late Princess Charles (sister to the Empress Augusta, and wife of the Emperor's brother) to wear a few gay-looking things of her own. Such an offer could not be refused, and Mademoiselle Rachel appeared in the gardens adorned with roses. On inquiring for the stage, she was told that there was none erected, and that she was expected to stand on a grass plot in front of the seats of her noble audience. This demand roused her quick temper, so that she was on the point of returning to Berlin, when her official attendant, the above-mentioned gentleman, pacified her by remarking that she would be on the same level with the audience, that her art would prove the greater for the want of any stage apparatus; and (last but not least) he reminded her of how much was at stake—an enormous honorarium and perhaps the repeal of that fatal interdiction. After a moment's hesitation and a struggle with herself, Mademoiselle Rachel took her cicerone's arm, and suffered him to lead her to the spot destined for her performance.

The evening was lovely; the moon, half-hidden behind a group of poplars, threw her silvery light on the pond and the gently murmuring fountain. A few torches and lights illuminated the face of the artist, while the court sat in the shadow. Deep silence ensued upon her appearance—one could hear the crickets chirp—and then she began her orations. The listeners seemed spell-bound: that was not human speech, it was music dropping from her lips. She was determined to be irresistible; and she succeeded so well, that even the hitherto unfriendly Emperor himself, won by her art, rose from his seat when she had ended, and meeting her half-way, kissed her hand in presence of the assembled court, assuring her that henceforth she would be welcome in Russia.

What were the praises, flatteries, and congratulations of the others who were crowding round the happy artist, compared to the homage rendered to her by the mighty ruler of Europe's vastest country, the monarch from whom a sign ordered thousands of his subjects to be or not to be!

Thus was one of the greatest autocrats in Europe won over by the acting and the elocution of—a woman!

EDITORIAL NOTE.

IN entering on the forty-seventh year of CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL, we are able to say with some pride that at no period in its long career has the work, to judge from its circulation, been more acceptable. In other words, the issue is greater than ever, notwithstanding the numerous rivals in cheap literature that have sprung up, and to which we have never had any particular objection; for in this as everything else there is room for all. This prolonged and even increased appreciation of the JOURNAL is, however, a little surprising. From the time we penned the opening address in 1832, a kind of new world has sprung up. We feel ourselves to be surrounded by masses of people who have no recollection of the backward state of affairs in the reign of William IV., because they were not then born. Our professed object, as originally set out, was to offer some elements of popular instruction, without trenching on matters of political or religious discussion, and that was done to the best of our ability. Originally the humbler classes were chiefly aimed at, but it soon became apparent that the work found its main supporters among families of a considerably higher station in society; aspiring youths in the middle classes, especially, adopting it as a weekly favourite. We are happy to think that among the sons and grandsons of those early patrons the work is received with undiminished interest. While one generation has succeeded another, we have in the varying fashions of the day never swerved from the principle on which we set out. Obloquy and vulgar persecution have been employed to gain us over to take a side. All in vain. At the outset we had resolved that nothing should induce us to become the sycophants of any sect or party whatever, and we can safely aver that that resolution has been kept. What others may do is nothing to us.

Does not the result bear the useful moral, that honest independence of principle is best after all? Dozens of rivals patronised by sects and parties have within recollection gone down; and here we are after six-and-forty years as lively as ever—rather better. It is well understood that CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL is a publication which does not intrude any peculiar views on religion or politics; that it tries to avoid controversial topics; and aims only at offering wholesome amusement and instruction—in short, always something which will, if possible, elevate and amuse, while in no respect offending. We feel that that has been the rôle assigned to us by Providence, and we intend to keep it. Encouraged by ever-increasing success, we shall continue to spare no pains in making the work an entertaining MAGAZINE for the family fireside. In offering these few explanations, the EDITORS—which in the present case is almost equivalent to PUBLISHERS—again have pleasure in acknowledging their obligations to the long roll of writers who help to sustain them in their efforts.

W. & R. C.

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THE JUBILEE SINGERS.

ONE of the most interesting and vivid of our recollections is that of witnessing some scenes in negro slavery in the United States, now upwards of twenty years ago—very nearly the close of the iniquity; but of that nobody was aware. There was a novelty in seeing fairly dressed men and women brought out for sale by public auction, and in observing how the persons who came to buy carefully examined the men's hands and the flexibility of their fingers, looked into their mouths to make sure of their teeth, and having effected a removal of the coats and shirts, scanned the bare backs to discover whether they had suffered by the lash. Just as in buying horses in a market, it was quite a business affair; and what was a little surprising, the unfortunate objects of this degrading exhibition took all in good part. But what else could they do? In the grasp of power, they knew that resistance was worse than useless. Close by were cowhide whips handled by heartless ruffians voraciously chewing tobacco, as if to keep up the proper inspiration of brutality. Across the way was seen an ugly brick building inscribed with the word JAIL, in tall black letters on a white ground, to which establishment, in case of remonstrance, the poor wretches would have been instantly marched for punishment. Doom hopeless!

The equanimity, and indeed the good-humour, with which these blacks seemed to endure their fate, indicated, we thought, good points of character. Nowhere in travelling about did we observe anything positively disagreeable, to remind us that the labourers in the fields or the loiterers at doorways were slaves. Often, we heard singing and jollity, as if light-heartedness was on the whole predominant. Obviously, slave-owners were not all Legrees. On the contrary, in many instances they shewed a kind indulgence to their 'servants,' as they called them, and were pleased to see them singing, laughing, and making merry in the intervals of rest from labour. Perhaps this is not saying much, for the singing of slaves may be compared to the notes of a bird in captivity, to

be admired, but pitted. Anyway, there was a disposition to seek solacement in the outpouring of song. If not intellectually brilliant, the negro is naturally vivacious. Even when he grows old, he is still something of a boy, with an inherent love of frolic. He is clever in picking up tunes, and one of the complaints which we heard against him in a free state was that if not looked after by his master, he would continually go out to entertainments and dance all night. A curious result of the taste for music has been the creation of what are known as negro melodies; partly suggested by old English airs, and by the psalm and hymn tunes that had been heard at church or in the devotional exercises of missionaries. With a blended simplicity and oddity, the negro airs which have gained currency are wonderfully harmonious and touching. The time is well marked, shewing correctness of ear, and accordingly the pieces, however eccentric in language, are well adapted for singing in harmony by a number of voices. From the performances of the 'Christy Minstrels,' as they are usually designated—white men with blackened faces imitative of negroes—people will have a pretty good idea of the melodies we speak of; but we should say that the real thing is to be obtained only from a band of genuine negroes, who for some years have been travelling about, and who style themselves the Jubilee Singers. Of these we want to say something.

As is well known, the abolition of slavery in the United States was no deliberate act of national justice and humanity, but took place in consequence of a proclamation issued by President Lincoln in the exigency of the civil war in 1862. Without preparation for freedom, over four millions of slaves were thrown on their own resources. They could work, but comparatively few of them could read; for it had been hitherto penal to teach them. Considering their state of ignorance, and the good grounds they generally had for resenting past treatment, they behaved with a singular degree of moderation. What, however, was to be done with such a mass of illiterates,

unaccustomed to self-reliance, and who, even if desirous of being taught, had no means of being so? Here comes in a bright feature of the Anglo-Saxon and Christian-minded North. Within six months of the close of the war, societies of benevolent individuals sprang up to extend the blessings of elementary education to hordes of negroes; and in which movement ladies appropriately took part. In the confusion and rankling animosities that prevailed in the South, the efforts to uplift the negro by means of schools were heroic, often dangerous, and always attended with difficulty. There was likewise much good done by the American Missionary Association. Schools, academies, and preaching stations were at length established in quarters where they were most needed. To complete the organisation of humanising influences, some thoughtful individuals struck out the idea of establishing a University for the higher education of the freed people, and training them to go forth as ministers and teachers, as well as leaders in various departments of civil life.

It was easier to conceive this brilliant idea than to bring it to a practical issue. Where was the money to come from to build a University, to equip it properly, and to pay for professors? There would even be a difficulty in finding a site, for few land-owners in a central situation would be willing to promote the elevation of the coloured races. The history of the way in which these preliminary difficulties were overcome is about as interesting a narrative as we ever read. Immense spirit and ingenuity were developed in bringing the scheme into shape. Without saying what it was for, a suitable site was procured at the price of sixteen thousand dollars, near Nashville, the capital of Tennessee. There were already a few frame-buildings on the spot, which were employed to accommodate a school, as a beginning of the proposed educational operations. The institution was called the Fisk University, in honour of General Clinton B. Fisk, who had taken a warm interest in the undertaking. The establishment was opened in January 1866.

By-and-by the school, or we might say schools, thrived. Thousands of negroes were taught by a band of eager teachers, some of whom only a short time before did not know one letter from another. There was an honest enthusiasm in the whole affair that brought with it the blessing of success. Again we are called on to note what good is often done by the quiet unprompted and unselfish energy of a single individual. About the time when the Fisk University was organised, there cast up a young man named White, who, looking about for a means of livelihood, took up the profession of teacher. He was the son of a village blacksmith in the state of New York, had fought in several battles during the war, and made himself useful in connection with the Freedman's Bureau at Nashville. He had a special taste for vocal music, with which he amused his leisure hours, and this accomplishment along with good business habits, made him very acceptable as a coadjutor in the University. White started a singing class among the negroes, male and female, who came to get lessons in reading; and, pleased with their aptitude, he fell upon

the bold plan of drilling them as a choir of singers, who should travel through the Northern cities in the hope of gathering money to help the University funds. Getting his band into trim, he set out with them on a musical excursion in October 1871, carrying with them the good wishes of all, from the Principal of the institution downwards.

In our own country, the getting up of a university, or even the enlargement of one, is ordinarily a serious affair. Unless some wealthy person has bequeathed money for the purpose, government is worried for grants, and the public are worried for subscriptions. Keeping proceedings of this kind in view, one can hardly fail to be amused with the novel and heroic notion entertained by a dozen simple-minded negroes in trying to collect fifty to a hundred thousand pounds for a University by mere dint of singing a few simple hymns, which illustrious dons of the musical profession would only laugh at. Yet, this is what was attempted. Led by White as general manager, and by Miss Wells, who took the oversight of the girls of the party, the negroes went on their way, poorly clothed, and with barely means to pay for a night's lodging. We observe by the history given of them, that they trusted a good deal to kind treatment from Congregational and other churches. They got the gratuitous use of chapels for their concerts, or what were termed 'praise services,' and when they became known, engagements freely poured in upon them. The sweetness of the voices, the accuracy of the execution, the precision of the time, and the wild simplicity of the words, astonished the audiences who listened to them; the wonder being of course augmented by the fact of their colour and the knowledge that only a few years ago these singers had been slaves. Although generally well received, they had at first numerous difficulties to encounter. The expense of travelling from town to town was considerable. To give a distinctive character to their enterprise, they assumed the name of Jubilee Singers, significant of their emancipation in 1862, as the year of negro jubilee!

Their first eminent successes were at New York, Boston, and in Connecticut. The good-will of the people took the shape not only of money contributions, but of articles to furnish their proposed University. A firm at Boston made them a present of a thousand dollar organ. The singing campaign of three months over the principal parts of the Northern states yielded, after paying all expenses, the sum of twenty thousand dollars. The company were received at the University with joy and thanksgiving—a prodigious triumph for White, the planner and conductor of the expedition.

Encouraged by this success, a second campaign followed, and the result was another sum of twenty thousand dollars, making forty thousand that had now been secured. In this expedition, the party encountered various caste prejudices. Halls were refused to them; at some railway stations they were treated with indignity, and hotel-keepers declined to give them accommodation. At one hotel where the keeper received them, all the waiters deserted their posts, and the Jubilee Singers waited on themselves and blackened their own boots. These misadventures were taken with good-humour. Having so far done well within American territory, the party resolved to try their

fortune in Great Britain, for which purpose they were favoured with letters of introduction likely to advance their enterprise. Curiously enough, cabin accommodation was refused to the party by one after another of the leading ocean steamship lines. At last they were received on board one of the Cunard steamers, and safely and agreeably landed in England.

The letters of introduction worked marvels. We are to contemplate the Jubilee Singers one May afternoon in 1873, at Willis's Rooms, giving a private concert to a select body of individuals, by invitation of the Earl of Shaftesbury and a Committee of the Freedman's Aid Society. There was a distinguished assemblage; the singers did their best, and all were delighted. The Duke and Duchess of Argyll were foremost in expressing a desire to promote the object of the party, and arranged for a visit of the singers to Argyll Lodge the next day. This visit to Argyll Lodge was a notable event. The Queen, who is always foremost in works of intelligent benevolence, graciously attended for a short time, and listened with manifest pleasure to the hymns which the singers had learned in bondage. Her Majesty in departing, communicated through the Duke her thanks for the gratification she had received. These preliminary efforts insured to the Jubilee Singers a wide round of popularity. Hospitable invitations poured in upon them from persons of literary and political distinction. Among the most pleasurable of these invitations was one to breakfast from Mr Gladstone, then prime-minister, by whom they were cordially received. After breakfast, the singers entertained the company with their wonderful music. The intense feeling with which they sang *John Brown*, with the refrain—

John Brown died that the slave might be free,

electrified the audience; and 'never,' said a spectator, 'shall I forget Mr Gladstone's rapid enthusiastic attention. His form was bent forward, his eyes were riveted; all the intellect and soul of his great nature seemed expressed in his countenance; and when they had finished, he kept saying: "Isn't it wonderful? I never heard anything like it!"'

After spending three months in London, the Jubilee Singers proceeded to give a round of concerts in the principal towns of England and Scotland; being everywhere well received by large and appreciative audiences. Financially, the excursion was eminently successful. Nearly ten thousand pounds had been raised for the Fisk University, besides special gifts for the purchase of philosophical apparatus, and donations of books for the library. The money collected first and last by the singers now amounted to about twenty thousand pounds, which went a considerable way towards the building of the University, which assumed shape and was opened in 1875. To reinforce the funds, another visit to Great Britain was determined on. We cannot go into an account of this second visit; it is enough to say that the singers again made their appearance in all the principal towns of England and Scotland, and were able to take back the sum of ten thousand pounds; making in all as a result of their labours the sum of thirty thousand. Since this time, the party have made various excursions, always in-

creasing the funds for the erection of college buildings; but of the exact particulars we have no account. One of the objects in view is to erect a building called the Livingstone Missionary Hall, designed, as we understand, for the special preparation of missionaries for Africa. The latest statement we see on the subject is that the Jubilee Singers have gone on a visit to Germany, to secure funds to complete this building and further equip the University for missionary work.

The vicissitudes of travelling at home and abroad during several years led to changes in the company of singers. When members were obliged to retire, others equally qualified took their place. At different times twenty-four persons in all have belonged to the company. All of them have been slaves or of slave parentage. Excepting a few mulattoes, all have been of a pure negro type; and their respective histories offer some interesting facts concerning the condition of people of colour in the slave states up till the period of general emancipation. It is gratifying to know that the extraordinary change of life from privation and contumely to comfort and public respect has not uplifted the feelings, or materially altered the habits of the members of the corps. In their moral and religious obligations they have ever been irreproachable. We are told that none of them uses tobacco; and their English friends, whose hospitalities have been so abundant, are equally surprised, if not gratified, to find that they are inveterate abstainers from alcoholic liquors. Considering the temptations and buffetings of their early life there is not a little to admire in the conduct as well as in the accomplishments of the several individuals composing the party. The energetic yet modest way they have acquitted themselves in the routine of the very peculiar duties imposed on them, is probably not often met with in parties of higher pretensions.

We have now in brief told the story of the Jubilee Singers, and it is more than ordinarily remarkable. A handful of freed negro slaves undertaking by voluntary efforts to collect funds wherewith to establish and support a University, having for its object the higher education of the coloured population in the United States. The enterprise has had no parallel. These negroes do not beg, nor do they trouble people for subscriptions. They only try to raise funds by the exercise of their talents in an honest line of industry, by communicating pleasure to countless audiences. Amidst the frauds and commercial rascalities of pompous pretenders that are becoming a scandal to the age, the unselfish and noble endeavours of these humble melodists stand out in marked contrast, as something to applaud and to redeem human nature. The marvel of the enterprise has been its universal success. High and low are equally pleased. Professing no particular knowledge of music, but yielding to none in an ardent admiration of the simpler class of national ballads and songs, we have listened to the melodies of the Jubilee Singers with heartfelt delight. Whether with or without instrumental accompaniment, the melodies might be described as supplying a new relish. It has been remarked that the greater number of the pieces are in the same scale as that in which Scottish music is written, with the fourth and seventh tones omitted. This would only indicate the untutored nature of their origin, and the

wonder is greater at the effects produced. Nothing is left for us to add but an advice to our readers. It is, to take the earliest opportunity to go and hear the JUBILEE SINGERS.

W. C.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER II.—AT CARBERY CHASE.

THE horseman, at whose approach the interesting inmate of *The Traveller's Rest* had so abruptly withdrawn from the place of observation whence he was contemplating the Elizabethan front of Carbery Court, had scarcely recognised in the lounge smoking his pipe beneath the elm, the bronzed seafaring fellow whom he had frequently of late encountered. But as the man moved off with hasty step and an evident dislike to observation, the rider's eyes for a moment followed him.

'A queer customer that,' he said carelessly to himself. 'What is he, I wonder? If I saw that ugly face of his near Ashdown Park or Newmarket Heath, I'd lay a trifle that he was a racing tout; in London I would class him as a dog-dealer or dog-stealer, or possibly a sham smuggler, one of those gruff longshore-men who waylay you with their contraband cabbage-leaf *Trabuços*; but being here, I think he has more the look of a real one.'

Having said which, he rode on, in the quiet enjoyment of a cigar, towards the material of which it is unlikely that the leaf of any British vegetable had contributed; while no sound but the jingling of the bridle-rein and the tramp of the horse's feet broke the silence. Overhead there soared aloft a living canopy of verdure, formed by the mighty trees, that seemed to throw, as it were, a succession of triumphal arches over the smooth carriage-road, flecked with broad bars of light and shadow. There were vistas here and there, opening out from between the massive trees, on which an artist's eye might have feasted, dells clothed with beech and birch trees, fairy glens through which trickled some brooklet fresh from its cradle among the ridges of Dartmoor, pools on which the water-lily floated, and around which the deer bent down their antlered heads to drink. But Jasper Denzil had little or no appreciation of the charms of a landscape, and as he rode on, the only comment which escaped him was evoked by the sight of the superb old house, its many windows glistening golden in the sloping sun, as though to challenge admiration.

'Tiresome old jail!' he said, tossing away the stump of his cigar. 'A nice place to be mewed up in, with the London season at high-pressure, is this! If it were mine to do as I liked with'—But the only son and heir of Sir Sykes Denzil did not definitely state the course that he should pursue were he undisputed proprietor of Carbery Chase.

Jasper, whose actual age may have been six or at the most seven and twenty, was one of those men of whom it is puzzling to say whether they look, for their years, very youthful or surprisingly old. He was below the middle height, and his smooth pale face seemed at first sight almost boyish; but the cold glance of the small blue eyes, the firmness of the compressed lips, and the tell-tale lines that were faintly visible at the angles of both eyes and mouth, were not such as we associate with ingenuous youth.

Captain Denzil (Jasper had at an early age attained, thanks to the golden ladder by which the offspring of wealthy men were wont to climb, his captaincy in the light cavalry regiment to which he had till recently belonged) had proved himself an expensive son to Sir Sykes. His fair moustache, pallid face, and drawling accent were well known on race-courses, and quite familiar in those darkened rooms at fashionable clubs where the fickle goddess Chance is worshipped by card-players around their lamp-lit green tables, while it is honest daylight in the workaday world beyond.

He rode into the yard and dismounted; but instead of immediately entering the house, lingered to exchange a thoughtful word or two as to the signs of an incipient spavin in the off fore-leg of the fiery chestnut which he had been riding.

'Knew he wasn't sound of course, when I bought him,' remarked the captain, with calm philosophy. 'A friend's horse never is, especially when the friend is such an impulsive open-hearted fellow as Charley Granger. But he was cheap, and he has a turn of speed, and I've entered him for the Pebworth Steeplechase, and don't want to pay forfeit. So see to the bandages, Phillips, will you; and don't have him out, except for gentle exercise on the soft, this fortnight. We mustn't neglect that leg.'

Jasper was not one of those who care for a horse, as some of us do, for the horse's own sake, and out of genuine love for the noblest of the dumb servants that do the bidding of mankind. But he did regard the genus *equus* as a very valuable instrument for gambling purposes, and as such to be tended with jealous care and helped, when convenient, to victory on the turf.

With a slow step and a careless indolent manner, Jasper Denzil crossed the paved yard, and entered by a side-door the mansion that must one day in the course of nature be his, but of which as a place of residence we have already heard him express an opinion the reverse of flattering. There was very little at Carbery Chase to amuse the captain, cut off from his usual sources of excitement and a temporary exile from London and its pleasures. It was sorry work this pottering business of picking up a few ten-pound bets on country courses, or winning paltry stakes by the aid of wretched platers. It was better than nothing no doubt; precisely as at Monaco we see the ruined millionaire, Spanish or Russian, eagerly playing for silver when his last rouleaux of louis-d'or have taken wing; but he felt that it was a sore degradation for one whose dash and coolness had won dubious compliments from very great personages.

Traversing a passage, Jasper presently crossed the great hall—full of costly marbles brought from Italy, in days when there were no manufacturers of the spurious antique—and opened the door of what was known as the morning-room, cheerful and bright as a morning-room should be, and overlooking the rose-garden, then glorious in its glow and blush of tender colour.

Two ladies were the occupants of the room, both young and both pretty, though each of them had that likeness to Jasper (her only brother) which we so constantly trace in members of the same family. Lucy it is true was dark-haired and dark-eyed; while Blanche, the younger and taller of the two, was delicately—perhaps too delicately—fair of

complexion, and had hair of the palest gold. Sir Sykes had been for several years a widower; and all the Denzil family, with the exception of the baronet himself, were now present in that room, through the French windows of which came stealing in the fresh scent of roses.

'I saw you, Jasper, from the pheasantry, as you came up the park; but you did not see me,' said Miss Denzil, smiling. 'You did not stay, then, to see the finish of the Pebworth cricket-match?'

'I—no!' answered Jasper with a yawn. 'Cricket is amusing, I daresay, to those who knock the ball about, or to those who run to pick it up again, as the French countess said of our noble national game; but it is slow—fearfully slow.' And the captain yawned again.

'Most things are, I am afraid, at Carbery,' said Blanche gently.—'We have tried to amuse him—have we not, Lucy?—by dragging him with us to such primitive merry-makings as lay within driving distance, archery-meetings, flower-shows.'

'Yes, and all manner of Arcadian entertainments of the same species,' interrupted Jasper, drumming with his ringed fingers on the glass of the open window near which he was standing. 'I believe I had a narrow escape from what they called a sillabub party at that old woman's (Lady Di Horner's) house at Ottery St Luke's, with a cow on the lawn and the rest of it. The natives, I suppose, like that kind of thing; I don't.' There was a half-peevish lassitude in his tone, in his attitude, as he spoke, which added emphasis to words that were, if ungracious, perhaps not unkindly meant. But his sisters were not in the least offended that their brother should shew so unaffectedly how little pleasure he took in their society, and how complete was his distaste for their simple pleasures and homely occupations. A grown-up brother is, in the eyes of good girls, a hero by right of birth, and with Lucy and Blanche the captain was a privileged person, not to be judged by the standards of ordinary ethics.

'If the governor,' said Jasper, after a pause, 'would ask people down here—I mean of course after town is empty—a houseful of people of the right sort, why then, one might get through the autumn and winter without being moped to death.'

Lucy shook her head. 'There is no chance, brother,' she said, 'that papa should fill his house with what you would consider people of the right sort. The Vanes will come of course, and the Henshaws, and—'

'Never mind the rest of the names,' broke in the captain with a lazy brusqueness; 'heavy county members, who know more of the points of a bullock than they do of those of a horse; and their fat wives and starched daughters. What have I done, to be buried alive in this way!'

'Women have this merit, that they seldom retort, as they might sometimes do with crushing effect, upon a man who bewails his hard lot, be his self-pity ever so unreasonable. Lucy and Blanche Denzil knew, or guessed, with tolerable accuracy that it was due to Jasper's own extravagance that he no longer wore the gay trappings of a captain of Lancers, and that the soles of his varnished boots were no longer familiar with the Pall-Mall pavement.

'I'll go in and see my father; he's in the

library, I suppose?' said Jasper, and without waiting for an answer, he sauntered off.

Sir Sykes Denzil was a man of methodical habits, and his son's conjecture that he would be found at that hour in the library was quite warranted, not only by fact, but by his daily practice. On his way thither the young man passed by the suite of drawing-rooms, only the smallest of which was ever used, save on the occasions, not too frequent, when some great dinner-party or possibly a dance at Carbery Chase set all the neighbouring lanes and roads aglow with carriage-lamps. With all its splendour, the Court was what might be described as a dull house; the master of which had never made the most, even for selfish purposes, of his large share in the good things of this world.

The library, Sir Sykes's favourite room, was a stately apartment, with gilt cornices and a richly painted ceiling. It overlooked the stone terrace whereon, amidst statues and marble vases overbrimming with scarlet geraniums, the peacocks strutted. The great central window was of ancient stained glass, and from its quaint panes in their leaden setting flashed forth the lost colours of the blue and crimson, deemed inimitable for centuries past, but which probably owed their peculiar beauty to the corroding touch of time. This window, of which honorable mention was made in the county guide-book aforesaid, glimmered with heraldic blazonry, wherein the couchant greyhounds of the present owners of Carbery found no place.

The baronet, who was seated at his writing-table, strewn with papers, looked up as he heard the opening of the door, and greeted his son with rather a conventional smile of recognition. 'So you are back with us earlier than usual, Jasper,' he said, in a tone that was polite, but scarcely cordial. The young man's voice, as usual with him when he addressed his father, had lost much of the languid insolence which habit had rendered natural to him.

'Yes, sir; I don't care much for cricket, so I did not stay to see the end of it. So far as I could hear, the Zingari were beating the County hollow. But as I said before, that style of thing is not much in my line.'

'Better for you, my boy, if it had been,' returned the baronet dryly. 'A young fellow cannot break his health or ruin his fortunes at cricket, as more fashionable pastimes may help him to do.'

The captain winced and reddened. 'I didn't expect a lecture, father,' he said peevishly. 'Indeed I'm not likely to forget the crasher I came down with, that my misfortunes should be thrown in my teeth every day I live.'

'We will let the subject drop,' said the baronet after a momentary pause. 'Who were at Pebworth to-day? No lack of company, I suppose? Our friends hereabouts are not all as complete cosmopolitans as you are, Jasper; and some of the ladies, at any rate may have gone there in hopes of seeing Devon win the game.'

Jasper half sullenly made answer that he could scarcely say who were there. 'Fnlforths and Courtenays and the Carews, and the people from Frideaux Park, yes; and the De Vere girls, and Harrogate their brother. The old Earl wasn't there, and the ladies went on horseback.'

'Lady Gladys looks well on horseback,' observed Sir Sykes with a sidelong glance at his son.

'Yes; and rides nicely,' answered Jasper with an air of the most utter indifference; and then the eyes of the father and the son met, not frankly, but as the eyes of two wary fencing-masters might do at the instant of crossing swords. Sir Sykes and Jasper were not, so far as outward seeming went, in the least alike. The common attribute of worldliness they did indeed share, but neither in looks nor in manner did they resemble each other. The baronet was a tall and handsome man, whose dark hair was now dashed with gray, and his high forehead deeply lined, but who still presented to the eyes of the world a showy exterior and a bearing that was at once dignified and urbane. That he was not in perfect health could only be conjectured from the slowness of his step, and those faintly marked furrows near the corners of the shapely mouth, in which a shrewd physician might have read of mischief silently at work; but to unprofessional scrutiny he appeared simply as a gentleman of a goodly presence.

A melancholy man, albeit a proud and a courteous one, Sir Sykes was known to be. And singularly enough, the baronet's sadness was supposed to date from the day when he had lost, long years ago, the eldest of his three daughters, a little girl to whom he was rumoured to have been unusually attached. This was the odder, because Sir Sykes was not the sort of man who is generally credited with very deep feelings or a peculiar strength of family affection. He had borne his wife's decease with polished equanimity; but those who had known him in his early poverty and in his subsequent prosperity averred that the lord of Carbery had never been the same man since the death of this child.

'I wish,' said Sir Sykes, speaking slowly, and poised a gold-hafted paper-knife between his soft white fingers—'I wish I could see you married and settled.'

'The settling, if, as I suppose, it means the making of a suitable settlement, makes the main impediment to marrying, with some of us at least,' rejoined Jasper with mock gravity; but before his father could reply, a servant entered bringing a letter. Sir Sykes mechanically took up the letter from the silver tray and as mechanically opened it. But his eyes had hardly glanced at the first half-page before a great and sudden change came over his calm face; he grew white, almost livid, to his very lips, and let his hand which held the open letter drop heavily upon the table.

'Are you ill, sir?' said Jasper quickly and with a sort of anxiety unusual with him. It was impossible to avoid taking notice of the baronet's very evident emotion; impossible too not to connect the cause of it with the letter which Sir Sykes held in his hand. But the master of Carbery Chase rallied himself, and though his face was even ghastly in its pallor and his breath came painfully, he managed to smile as he rejoined: 'Not ill. It is a mere pain, a spasm at most, which comes at times, but goes as quickly, or nearly so, as it comes. It is a trifle, not worth the talking about. It is getting late, and I have a note or two to write and some papers to look over before the dressing-bell rings. We shall meet at dinner presently.'

Jasper rose to go. 'I hardly like'—he began.

'I am better; I am well; it is nothing,' interrupted Sir Sykes irritably; and then blandly added: 'I thank you, my dear boy, for your solicitude, but I am best alone.'

Jasper had not proceeded two paces along the carpeted corridor before he heard the key of the library door turned from within.

'I'd give a cool hundred,' said this exemplary youth, 'to look over my father's shoulder as he reads that letter. To have a hold on the governor would'—He left the rest of the sentence unspoken, and passed on, leaving Sir Sykes in the locked-up library to the company of his own solitary thoughts.

TIGER-SHOOTING.

TIGER-SHOOTING in India differs a trifle from the tame pursuit of game in England—a very different thing indeed from the miserable amusement of the *battue*, in which hundreds of defenceless creatures are shot down without any chance of danger to the shooter. To go out tiger-shooting is to run the risk of encountering a deadly enemy, which on grounds of public policy it is of importance to destroy. So much as a preliminary observation.

The danger connected with tiger-shooting varies very much in proportion to the conditions under which it is prosecuted. Thus a man on foot following the fresh tracks of a tiger up to his lair, and shooting him as he lies, or following him up on foot when wounded, incurs the maximum risk. In all cases, after being wounded, ungovernable fury and a fierce longing for revenge take the place of that instinctive fear or shyness of man which tigers share with all other wild animals. This instinctive dread of man is so well known to the tribes who inhabit the forests of India, that even solitary individuals will hail the prospect of suddenly encountering a tiger, provided, of course, that he is not a man-eater. They know their safety at such a moment lies in preserving a composed attitude and demeanour. The tiger will often yield the right of way; but if the human subject finds it necessary to set that example in the way of politeness, he knows it to be absolutely essential to the preservation of his life that he should do so with every appearance of self-possession, and without any signs of fear or precipitancy. A passage in *King Richard III.* accurately reflects the line of conduct which should be observed, holding good as it does equally with reference to the tiger:

To fly the boar, before the boar pursues,
Were to incense the boar to follow us,
And make pursuit where he did mean no chase.

In proportion to the successful days, the number of blank days in tiger-shooting is extraordinarily large, as the experience of most shikarees will confirm. This is owing to 'hanks' or beats being, so often badly planned or mismanaged; through which tigers escape which might otherwise have easily been brought to book. The dry and denuded state of an Indian jungle during the hot weather makes that the most fitting season for tiger-shooting. Indeed it is the only season in which the sport can be undertaken with a reasonable prospect of success. The available covers for a tiger are then much reduced in number and extent; and in the inverse ratio are the chances increased of the animal's not betaking himself to

some distant locality before the plan of action which is intended to effect his destruction has had time to develop itself. In other words, any faint and accidental signs of a disturbance in a tiger's vicinity will rouse him from his lair, and drive him to green patch or snug retreat miles away, if the weather be cool and cover abundant; whereas with very hot weather and extensive denudation of shade, he will prefer remaining where he is until the sounds assume too decided a character to be mistaken; when the probabilities are that the sportsman will be perfectly ready on his making a move.

The great point to remember in arranging to hunt a tiger is that one of his most prominent characteristics is cunning—and that this *must be met by cunning*. This is not sufficiently studied, especially by beginners. Eager and enthusiastic for the fray, and for the thrill of satisfaction which the all-important moment of the actual kill inspires, the inexperienced sportsman is too apt to overlook those precautions and preparations which are essential aids to success; or he relies upon others for doing in the above respects what he should attend to himself. The first thing to be done on arriving at the ground where a tiger has safely been marked down by the early despatched scouts is to acquaint one's self thoroughly with its topography. The nature of the ground varies very much; consisting sometimes of a pile of rocks rising from a plain, of a confused mass of hills, or of a large single hill, a river or small water-course stocked with green bushes, and with level jungle or perhaps open ground bordering on both sides; and so on. On being roused from his lair in say a water-course by the beaters, a tiger is very likely to cross over into the jungle, especially if another ravine is not far off to which he can retire. He does so with the express object of getting rid of his disturbers as soon as possible; or let us say that instinct tells him that an entire change of locality is most conducive to his safety. On the other hand, if there be no adjoining cover, a tiger will keep to the same channel and steal along its course. The difference between the two cases represents the comparative prospect of a tiger being bagged. When a tiger is compelled to steal along the channel from which he has been roused, the prospect becomes nearly a certainty, assuming the 'hank' to be conducted in a correct manner.

A very slight noise, such as slight coughing, will sometimes start a tiger; while he will at other times refuse to move, although even shots should be fired into the bush or among the rocks where he may be lying concealed. As Colonel Rice, late of the Bombay army, very justly remarks in his book entitled *Tiger-shooting in India*—and the writer's own experience is entirely corroborative of that statement—no two tigers can be depended on for behaving exactly alike under the same circumstances. An old tiger, and especially one which has been hunted before, is extremely wary, and very difficult to circumvent with even good management; while a young one readily falls a victim, like any other greenhorn. A tigress with young cubs is always very savage, and will sometimes charge anybody approaching her den or other resting-place before her own presence is at all suspected. Three men in the service of the writer were once obliged to take refuge on a rock

only some six or seven feet high, where an angry tigress bayed them, and repeatedly threatened to charge home for at least two hours. One of the men was armed with a sword, and the other two had nothing but sticks in their hands. The tigress crouched at the very foot of the rock, which was small but flat-topped, over and over again. She there alternately blinked and glared at the unfortunate men, who only succeeded in keeping her off from actually springing on them by dint of vigorous and incessant shouting, and constantly changing front, according as the tigress herself kept moving from one side of the rock to another, and occasionally retiring a few paces, and then stealing forward and crouching again. The state of their throats and the terribly husky whisper to which their voices were in the end reduced, may easily be imagined. However, down to their humblest followers, hunters as a rule are a merry set, and directly actual danger has passed away the danger is forgotten.

In large covers there, are often outlets and lines of exit, in addition to those guarded by a party of say four or five sportsmen, who post themselves at the most important points. These all require to be blocked up, so that a tiger, should he attempt to escape by any of them, may be readily turned on to a path which will draw him under fire. One of the covers in which the writer was fortunate enough to bag several tigers in different years, consisted of a river of about a hundred and fifty yards width, with ravines branching out at different points, and low hills bordering the banks. It was impracticable with fewer than a hundred men, and was best driven by elephants, in consequence of the thick and tangled state of the bushes. It was a piece of ground of the kind described above, offering numerous outlets, as the cover extended right under one of the banks, and ran for some distance along the length of the river; while the bank itself was of no great height, and might be ascended in a moment at any point. The method of blocking up the outlets which the sportsmen themselves cannot watch, is to place over them, on trees, the sharpest and most intelligent of the men that can be selected from among the beaters. They should be instructed to strike the tree with a stone taken up in the hand for that purpose, or to employ any other simple process of producing a noise, so that the tiger may be headed back the moment he is seen to be advancing, and his intention is unmistakable. A blank shot will be necessary to turn a *rapidly* advancing tiger; and a matchlock or spare gun in the hands of a competent person should in such cases be kept in reserve. Many of the rivers in India during the hunting season are perfectly dry beds, except as to a narrow rill or narrow stream. The actual water's edge is, however, almost sure to be the tiger's position, if fringed by bushes sufficiently large to afford him shelter; for he delights in lapping the water frequently, and in lavishing his limbs during the hottest hours of the day.

With respect to the height a tiger will clear at a bound or series of bounds, some uncertainty seems to prevail. In Captain Shakspeare's *Wild Sports of India*, the author, when twelve feet up a tree, scarcely thought himself beyond the reach of the man-eater he was expecting, as he believed a tiger capable of springing over

that height. In the book of Colonel Gordon Cumming (a brother of the African hunter), a sad case is recorded of his gun-bearer being pulled out of a tree and killed by a wounded tiger through incautiously standing only some eight feet above the ground. But points of this nature are altogether of a secondary character, the slightest vantage-ground being sufficient if the requisites are preserved of a cool head and steady hand to guide the management of an efficient weapon.

To the generality of tastes, the most satisfactory method of hunting tigers is with and upon a well-trained elephant. But when the arrangements are on a very extensive scale, they fail of anything like due effect. On special occasions, elephants have been employed in the hunting-field by the score, and also by the hundred, as in the case of the Prince of Wales's excursions in Nepal. A cordon of eight hundred elephants was then employed to inclose a jungle and to drive the game on to a central point; but the bag, though good, was disproportionately small, looking to the means and labour employed. Better results might have been obtained if the ground had been traversed in sections with only a few elephants, though this would have required more time, which probably could not be spared. The great object to be kept in view in approaching a tiger for the purpose of obtaining a fair shot, is to do as little as possible towards startling the beast until within a few yards, even though obstructions such as bushes or rocks intervene; for when once a 'scare' is excited, a tiger will break through an inclosing line of elephants and probably escape altogether; whereas by being quietly followed up with scouts previously sent forward to note and telegraph his progress, the chances are all in favour of the sportsman.

In hilly tracts where the hills run in long ridges and are flanked or intersected by ravines, as in Rajpootana, tiger-shooting may at all times be conducted on foot with comparative safety. This was successfully done by Colonel (then Lieutenant) Rice from twenty to twenty-five years back. He never once employed an elephant, and treats the notion of doing so with a certain amount of disdain. Confessing to a desire to employ his rifle on the tigers in the island of Singapore, which is (or certainly was) very much infested by them, he remarks: 'There the old notion prevails that without elephants tigers are best let alone.' Evidently the Colonel does not consider the elephant a necessary adjunct to the sport, nor did he really find it so. There can, however, be no question that in large swamps and grass tracts, and in fact under all circumstances, an elephant is a most powerful auxiliary, whose importance cannot be over-rated. If trees and such positions are taken to meet the tiger when he first breaks, the advantage of afterwards following him up on an elephant if only wounded, is too obvious to need any comment. But it is of course absolutely necessary that the elephant should be one which can be depended on for making a firm stand before a tiger. The more steady the elephant, the better the aim that can be taken; but the uninitiated should know that there is always some slight oscillatory movement in an elephant, so that a small though perhaps an infinitesimal measure of calculation has to be applied in shooting from its back. From a neglect of this necessity,

tigers are sometimes missed at absurdly close quarters, though there may be no actual change in the elephant's position to account for the circumstance, and to justify the miss. On the other hand, as sometimes happens, an elephant may very seriously incommode or perhaps precipitate his rider to the ground, by actually charging a tiger and dropping down on his knees, in order the better to crush the foe. At the same time, an elephant that bolts jeopardises his rider's life in a worse degree, by the reckless manner in which he pursues his flight. Should the jungle consist of trees, there is almost a certainty of the howdah being dashed up against them, or of its being swept off by some projecting bough, which affords a clear passage to the body of the elephant, but not to the howdah and those seated in it. The latter, therefore, run a serious risk of being badly injured or of losing their lives.

One important essential for the obtaining of sport is a liberal expenditure of money. It both sweetens labour and smooths the path to danger. To keep an elephant in prime hearty condition costs about fifteen pounds a month, and good elephants may occasionally be borrowed from native chiefs through the instrumentality of political officers; but unless one has influence enough to insure his being thus favoured, he should make up his mind to hunt on foot. Many men have done, and still do so with the most satisfactory results; while with respect to elephants, some special elements of risk exist, which prove fatal entirely from a want of common forethought. Thus, an unfortunate officer of one of Her Majesty's regiments serving in India ventured into a jungle after a tiger, seated merely on the pad on which a howdah is made to rest; he was thrown off, and fell into the jaws of the enraged beast. A person seated in this manner is at any moment liable to be thrown by a sudden swerve, and such an occurrence is extremely likely when a tiger charges, or suddenly appears before an elephant. The writer remembers an instance within his own experience of being mounted on an elephant off whose back at least a hundred tigers had at various times been killed, and which was therefore generally very staunch, and of there being a second and third elephant on each side of the first; yet on a panther very little bigger than a large cat charging from a bush, the three elephants together turned in an instant and ignominiously retreated for about a dozen yards. The shock of the movement was so great that he was forced back on the seat from which he had just risen the moment before, and must have infallibly been hurled to the ground had he been seated on a pad only. It should therefore be adopted as a rule never to be deviated from, that a tiger should not be approached on an elephant otherwise than in a properly constructed howdah.

But as a contrast to the behaviour of the panther above referred to, a large tiger will sometimes altogether refuse to face an elephant, and will retreat from point to point of a cover until he at last becomes an easy victim; which shews in what extremely opposite lights the subject requires to be looked at.

The duty of arranging a proper plan of attack upon a tiger in any known position is sometimes delegated by the English sportsman to his head native shikaree, who is qualified for that task both

by a certain aptitude and a considerable amount of experience; but the best of such men are apt sometimes to fail, and close supervision of them is consequently always necessary. Besides, they are generally trained by those who have them in their service; and a long course of association and reciprocal action between master and servant is needed to produce an efficient henchman. It is therefore advisable for men who are about to begin tiger-shooting to take their initiatory lessons in jungle-craft under the guidance of some brother-sportsman, who can be looked on as a sort of distinguished professor who has already graduated with honours in his studies.

THE BELL-RINGER.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.—THE STORY OF RUTH.

'I CAN'T think whatever's come over Nathan; he's that queer there's no such thing as making of him out.' This remark was addressed by Mark Day, the tenor bell-ringer, to Obadiah Lang, who rang the third bell, a few days after the events narrated in the previous chapter.

'Ay,' responded Obadiah. 'There's the practisin' for Christmas-eve, the practisin' for the carols and for the hymns a' Christmas-day; he don't seem to care about them at all, and when I says to him: "How about the evergreens for the church?" he stared hard, and said: "I'll see;" and walked off.'

'That ain't all neither,' said Mark Day. 'He's wonderful curious about his house. He don't ask nobody in, but stands agen the door, with it in his hand, and seems afraid all the time you are talking to him. My opinion is, trouble's turned his brain. If he don't alter, I shall speak to the parson.'

'Don't do nothing you're sorry for afterwards,' replied Obadiah. 'Y' see Nathan ain't like one of us; he mostly have his reasons for everythink, which ain't the case with everybody nowadays: it's all talk and no do with the many.'

At this moment some one made his way to the churchyard, and to that some one, the men touched their hats respectfully. It was Oliver Peregrine. He brushed past quickly; but had the men been keen observers, they might have noticed that his face was pale and his air abstracted. He was going for a long and solitary walk, his custom when any matter disturbed him, or as Gertrude Peregrine said, 'when he had a fit of the blues.' He was not favoured by that young lady, who secretly wondered how Patricia could fancy him. To her sister, Gertrude said nothing of her choice, for Patricia was reserved and distant even to her nearest of kin. Few could imagine how deeply she loved this silent studious man. He himself was far from guessing the depth of her affection, his own being centred not on Patricia but on her inheritance, which would be his by marriage. All his life he had coveted a position with wealth to support it; had determined to make it his; had planned and worked for it; when, just as he was on the point of attaining his ends,

Death stepped in, and for the time frustrated his hopes. Again the time drew near, and again Death intervened; while impatient of the delay, the arrival of Colonel Lindsay, whom he well remembered, proved a further source of annoyance.

Oliver and the Colonel had been secret antagonists in days gone by; for the latter, a brave, honest, God-fearing soldier, disliked the character of the younger man, whom he mistrusted; and from his long and close intimacy with Squire Peregrine, felt at liberty to search into matters of which he had heard, but seen nothing. After some years spent in India, he had returned, to find changes at Linden Hall which grieved and even displeased him. He felt more than ever disposed to mistrust Oliver, but like a skilful tactician, knew that his plans must be laid with the utmost secrecy; his enemies being the obstinate and unforgiving disposition of his old friend, the craftiness of Oliver, and his ignorance of the whereabouts of the outlawed son, to whom he had acted as god-father, and for whom he entertained a true affection. He had heard the story as related by Dobson, whose fidelity was unimpeachable; but found that even that faithful dependent was obliged to acknowledge that the case was as clear as the day, and that Mr Bertram would never be forgiven by his father.

'Never, sir,' concluded Dobson; 'not if he was dying.'

'And how about the girl's brother, Dobson? You mentioned her brother. Is he still alive? And does he manifest a vindictive spirit towards — towards my god-son?'

'Not he, sir. Nathan Boltz has forgiven him years ago. Poor Ruth forgave him long before she died; but my master will never forgive him. My mistress died with his name upon her lips; I believe waiting for his return had killed her. It is a sad history, sir.'

Colonel Lindsay had made up his mind he would hear the story from the lips of Nathan himself, and at once. Therefore, on the evening of the day when Mark Day and Obadiah Lang had conversed respecting Nathan, there came a gentle tap on the cottage door, which the owner cautiously opened. In a few words the Colonel made it known that he desired to speak to him; and with some hesitation Nathan bid him enter. The Colonel had excused himself after dinner from returning to the drawing-room, and had wrapped a large cloak over him by way of disguise; this and his fur cap and muffler prevented Nathan from discovering the rank of his visitor until they were usually lived. The cottage staircase led from the kitchen to the floor above; but the door which opened upon the kitchen was shut.

Nathan waited for Colonel Lindsay to speak; he knew that he was a visitor at the Hall, and yet he shewed little anxiety concerning what he might have to say to him. But when the Colonel, with soldierly authority, made known who he was, and that he came for the purpose of hearing the sad story of his sister's life, in order to forward the ends of justice; then Nathan's hands trembled, his lip quivered, and in a low voice he begged to be excused.

'No,' replied Colonel Lindsay with decision and yet kindness in his tone; 'you must tell me the whole of the particulars, either here or in a court of justice; for I am determined to search them out, for reasons which I shall hereafter explain.'

Nathan gazed at his visitor inquiringly, then gathering his resolution together, he said: 'If your object, Colonel Lindsay, be to bring the offender to justice, I must utterly decline either in this place or any other to open my lips upon the subject. I will never betray him. I mean that I will give no evidence, not even if I am punished for withholding it.' He spoke under considerable excitement, but still with caution in his manner.

This was not lost upon the Colonel, who answered: 'Would you shield your sister's betrayer, the man who beguiled her, and then left her to sustain herself as best she might?'

'He did not do that,' replied Nathan; 'she received an allowance as long as she lived. But I promised her on her dying bed never to reveal anything concerning her; and can I, ought I to break that promise?'

'Yes!' answered the Colonel decidedly. 'Nathan Boltz, you may trust me not to make use of my knowledge against the author of all this sorrow, for the sake of my old friend, for the sake of his son. Can you not trust me?'

'Yes, sir, I will trust you; but you will not'—He paused.

'I will do nothing without your consent,' said Colonel Lindsay. 'And now, let me hear it, for time passes. Please, begin at the beginning.'

'My father,' began Nathan, 'was a Dutch sailor. My mother died when Ruth was thirteen, and I two years older. After her death—which happened at a time when my father had returned from a voyage—he did not go to sea any more, but became a labourer under Squire Peregrine, and kept a house for me and Ruth. The Squire was very kind to my father and his orphans; and after a time Ruth learned the dressmaking, and I was apprenticed to the head gardener at the Hall. My sister was a beautiful girl, the belle of the village, and as modest as she was pretty. We were very happy, until the Squire's son came home from college, and began to notice Ruth in a manner which led my father to warn her to beware. She smiled in her innocence, and told him he was mistaken; and as we saw little or nothing of Mr Bertram, the feeling died out. Thus matters remained for more than a year. But when I was twenty and Ruth eighteen, the blow fell with crushing effect upon us all. We rose one morning to find her gone, and to hear that Mr Bertram had also disappeared, after forging his father's name for five hundred pounds. It was useless to pursue the fugitives, even if we had had any clue to their flight; and our desire was frustrated by orders from Squire Peregrine to abandon all search. Day after day we waited and hoped. But it was some months before poor Ruth made her way to us, footsore and weary, and begging forgiveness for her sin. Then we knew that he had not married her; and my father went nigh mad with anger. We had been poor, but free from shame. He thanked God that my mother was dead; and followed her soon after the death of Ruth's baby, which lived only a few weeks. From time to time Mr Bertram sent her money, and when I mentioned him,

she always answered: "Have patience, Nathan. He will marry me soon. Do not question me; only trust me." I was very bitter against him then, and would have killed him if we had met. I told Ruth so; and she shuddered and prayed we might never meet until he had done her justice. So the weary time went on; poor Ruth hopeful and patient; so patient, that I used to wonder how she could live alone year after year and not try to find him, not go mad with grief and disappointment. But so it was. I could never understand her. We cannot all bear trouble alike, sir'—

Nathan stopped suddenly, and turned his face away.

'Go on,' said Colonel Lindsay, rather anxiously, consulting his watch; and Nathan obeyed.

'My sister and I lived together in this manner for more than ten years. She supported herself by dressmaking, and was fully employed, for her history was known, and she was deeply pitied. As she received a regular allowance from Mr Bertram, she must have known at such times where he was; but never allowed me to see or hear anything of her proceedings. Sometimes my violence frightened her. I know now how blind and wrong I was. The Squire, who is a true gentleman, gave me the office of bell-ringer and sexton, and made us many valuable presents; and it was understood that no mention should ever be made by either of us of the blight and sorrow of our life. But one day when my sister heard from Mr Dobson that his young master's name was struck out of the will, and that the young ladies were to be brought up in ignorance that they had a brother, she came home in great distress; and one evening soon after, when she had been with some work to a distant farm, she fainted on this spot where I now sit, causing me great alarm. She would not reveal the cause of her illness; and from that time, which was two years from the date of Mr Bertram's flight, I said nothing to her of her sorrow and its cause. Ten years after that her health gave way, and I saw that her sickness was unto death. Inwardly, I vowed vengeance on the man who had wrought this foul wrong; outwardly, I remained calmly waiting for the end. Every luxury was sent her from the Hall; but Mrs Peregrine did not visit her; no doubt she was forbidden, as her nature was both gentle and forgiving. However, when the end was near at hand, Ruth implored me to fetch her, and I did so. The urgency of my manner prevailed, and she came immediately, alone and on foot. It was too late; Death had arrived before her; and after a few kind words to me, she left. I found all the money Ruth had received from Mr Bertram put by, and used a portion of it for funeral expenses. From the day of her death I was a changed man. She had besought me, charged me, as I would meet her hereafter, to conquer even a desire for vengeance, and had commended Mr Bertram to my care and protection, should he ever return; and so vehement was her manner and so solemn her tone, that I made a vow to obey her dying injunction; and have kept it. I have forgiven, as I hope to be forgiven.'

Again Nathan paused, while a strange peacefulness gathered over his face.

'Have you finished?' inquired his visitor, much moved.

'Not quite. Soon after the date of Ruth's death, all remittances ceased; and I concluded that he who had sent them was dead. This was one circumstance worth notice. The other, that shortly before her death Mrs Peregrine sent for me, and charged me that should her son return, I would neither do nor say anything to widen the breach between him and his father. For "Nathan," she said, "I feel convinced that some day he will return. Therefore, for the sake of poor Ruth, who is gone, and for my sake, who will soon follow her, promise me that you will do what you can to bring them together; promise me, Nathan! I have always been so grieved that I was too late to hear what your sister had to say. Poor girl, she had a claim on us, although the world would have smiled at the idea. It is just possible that she might have been married to my son. What do you think?"

'I told her I thought not; but added that my sister had been very secret in all that she had said and done.

"'Tis a great relief to speak of my poor boy," said Mrs Peregrine, who seemed to forget all difference in rank; "and this will be the last time, Nathan, that we may meet on earth. Bear my words in mind. My end is peace, but one cannot have peace without forgiveness."

'I left her almost awe-stricken; it was so wonderful to have had this lesson twice repeated. Neither had said a word of the wrong done to them; it seemed to have faded out before the joy and peace which filled their hearts, and which now fills mine.'

Nathan paused, and again the bright look stole into his face.

'Well?' said Colonel Lindsay.

'That is all, sir,' answered Nathan, evidently relieved that his visitor rose to go.

'Nothing more?' pursued the Colonel, as he buttoned his cloak. He looked straight at Nathan, whose eyes fell before the soldier's searching glance.

'No,' he hesitated—'nothing.'

There was silence. Suddenly a voice from a room above called 'Nathan!' twice.

'Whose voice is that?' exclaimed Colonel Lindsay.

'I thought you lived alone?'

'I do; but this is a friend who is ill, and is staying with me for a time. Excuse me, sir, but I am wanted.'

Again the call for Nathan.

'Go to your friend,' said the Colonel; 'I will not detain you. After you have attended to his wants, come back to me.'

Very unwillingly Nathan opened the staircase door; but no sooner had he turned to go upstairs than he found his visitor behind him.

'Go on,' he said, as he paused. 'I can read you like a book.' Another moment, and Colonel Lindsay had clasped the hands of Bertram Peregrine, and Nathan had left the two alone.

Alone with Bertram, the Colonel heard his story, sympathised in his trials, related all that had been told him by the Squire, and promised to act as mediator between father and son; for he entertained no doubts as to the truth of the statement, having always believed his god-son sinned against rather than sinning. At the same time he congratulated himself on his true perception of character.

When Colonel Lindsay returned to the Hall he

was in a fever of anxiety, distress, and hope; what steps to take he could not tell, but determined to have but one confidant, Nathan Boltz.

CHAPTER III.—TOLLING THE CUREW.

Oliver Peregrine hated Nathan Boltz; but nobody suspected it, least of all Nathan himself. Oliver longed for the time to come when as Squire of Linden he could shew his hatred, for which he considered he had satisfactory reasons: one being, that Nathan was a favourite in the village and Oliver was disliked; another, that he was a protégé of the Squire's; a third, that he had been a great hindrance to Oliver's schemes. And now this Colonel Lindsay seemed to be smitten with the bell-ringer, for he frequently engaged him in conversation and met him in the belfry to inspect the bells. Evidently the Colonel was mad on the subject of bell-ringing.

But at the end of a fortnight it occurred to Oliver, who was always prying and suspecting, that their visitor must have some deeper motive than this love of bells and their ringers. He set himself to watch. Just now the Hall was very quiet. Christmas would be kept entirely by themselves, therefore Oliver had plenty of leisure. He said nothing to Patricia of his suspicions; he was not communicative, and she forbore to question him.

To Gertrude, Oliver had never appeared more distasteful than at this time; and she missed the presence of the sweet sister in whom she had confided; for Gertrude had her romance. A very degrading affair Patricia would have called it. However, no one knew of it. Indeed Gertrude had dared scarcely confess it to herself. She loved with the depth and purity of a Christian maiden. Whom? None other than Nathan the bell-ringer! Fearful was Gertrude of whispering his name even in the solitude of her chamber. Yet it afforded her a melancholy pleasure that he should have prepared the last resting-places of her mother and sister, and that in some manner, she did not quite know how, his life should be connected with her family.

'But what recompense can we make him,' she would argue, 'in return for Bertram's wrong? Even my father acknowledges that he did this wrong, and has made him pay in full the penalty of his sin.' And then she would sigh, as she felt how hopeless, how almost criminal was her love. In vain, however, she struggled against it. In her eyes Nathan was the true type of a gentleman; and 'Oh!' she would cry, 'if Bertram felt thus for Ruth, how could he—how could he forsake her in her time of need?'

Sometimes Gertrude had feared that Oliver Peregrine would discover her secret, or suspect her, from her having already refused certain eligible connections approved by her father; but she had no cause to fear: her family had not the most remote suspicion of the truth.

Christmas drew near, while Colonel Lindsay continued his visits to the belfry, where, as we know, certain weighty considerations detained him in converse with Nathan; and several times Oliver had watched the Colonel emerge from the cottage of the man he so detested. At last, with some difficulty, Oliver managed to play the eaves-dropper, and gathered from their conversation that

the subject of it was closely connected with his uncle.

'What—if?' he muttered to himself, but dared not complete his question; and as he walked home, after the Colonel had left Nathan, he grew more and more uneasy, and determined to find out for himself the secret of Nathan's attic window, where for the last fortnight a light had been observed. Conceive his annoyance when, on commencing a cross-examination of the Colonel in a friendly tone, he found the old soldier on his guard, and ready to parry every attack. Foiled on every side by the experienced veteran, Oliver altered his tactics, and made up his mind to use force, as stratagem availed nothing, and to wring the secret from Nathan Boltz.

It was on a dark starless evening that Nathan set out to toll the curfew, accompanied by Bertram Peregrine, who having recovered in a great measure from the effects of his fatigue and exposure, desired to revisit the well-remembered church, in which many of his ancestors were buried. Colonel Lindsay had arranged to meet him there to decide upon an immediate course of action; and the belfry was to be the scene of their consultation. Nathan and his patient soon reached the belfry, whence the tolling of the curfew was to be the signal for the Colonel to join them. But Oliver had invented a mysterious communication which should detain the Colonel in waiting for an imaginary visitor, and give him the opportunity of going instead; therefore while the soldier waited impatiently at the Hall for his unknown correspondent, Oliver borrowed his cloak, and opening the door in the wall before mentioned, entered the churchyard and repaired to the church.

'I hear the Colonel; he has just come in,' said Nathan. 'Will you shew a light, Mr Bertram?' As he spoke he continued the tolling of the curfew; and his companion descended the stairs with the lantern in his hand; but he saw no one, for Oliver was concealed in the deep shadow of the porch.

Just as Bertram stepped forward saying: 'This way, Colonel Lindsay,' the lantern was dashed from his hand, and a violent blow felled him to the ground. He rose and grappled with his antagonist, who maintained a dead silence, until slipping over the steps into the interior of the church, they fell with violence on the stone floor; at the same moment Bertram felt a sharp wound in his side, and uttered a loud cry as Nathan rushed from the belfry bearing a candle in his hand. He saw before him Oliver Peregrine about to escape from the scene, while his cousin lay on the floor of the church bleeding and unconscious.

In a moment Nathan had grasped Oliver in a powerful grip, the signal for a terrible struggle, during which, however, the latter overpowered his antagonist; and the would-be murderer escaped in the darkness, just as Colonel Lindsay, who had begun to suspect treachery, came hastily upon the scene followed by Dobson and two or three of the villagers. The reason of the sudden stoppage of the bell was apparent to all. With faces of horror and affright they gazed upon Nathan, who, breathless and trembling, supported the wounded man upon his arm.

'What is it? Who is it?' demanded Colonel

Lindsay, as he picked up his cloak, which lay in the porch; but Nathan made no reply; and his interrogator saw that for some unknown reason he purposely kept silence; also that he took no notice of the cloak or the broken lantern, but signed to Dobson to help him to bear Bertram from the church.

Colonel Lindsay at once comprehended the manoeuvre; and spreading out the cloak, they laid Bertram gently down upon it; then Nathan, assisted by two labourers and the Colonel, raised him, and preceded by Dobson, whose legs trembled beneath him, bore their senseless burden through the churchyard. 'To the Hall!' was the word of command, given and obeyed, as they marched slowly but steadily through the grounds, until they reached the principal entrance. There a crowd of bewildered faces including those of Squire Peregrine, his daughters and servants, met their gaze.

'Charles,' said Colonel Lindsay, 'I bring you your son. You dare not refuse him a home if he is living, or a grave if he be dead.'

The Squire made no reply, but sank upon the nearest chair and covered his face with his hands.

'Shew me to a room,' continued Colonel Lindsay.

Now Nathan and the gloomy procession moved up the broad staircase, leaving those below watching their progress in dumb amazement. Patricia was the first to recover, and sign to her father to follow her to the room they had just left. Her movement dispersed the crowd of servants to wonder and talk among themselves; while Gertrude found herself surrounded by her younger sisters, who began eagerly plying her with questions. To all their importunities, Gertrude only answered: 'Do not ask me—do not ask me; and with the tears streaming down her face, which she in vain attempted to control, she mounted the staircase, and with a trembling hand knocked at the door of the room into which her brother had been carried. Colonel Lindsay answered her.

'May I come in?' she whispered; and receiving permission, she stepped up to the bed, around which the men were still busy. One glance at her apparently dying brother determined her.

'Colonel Lindsay,' she said with forced composure, 'pray telegraph at once for a physician. Papa cannot collect himself sufficiently; but I am sure he would wish it.' Then turning to two young men who stood waiting near the door, she despatched them in all speed for the local practitioner, Dr Downes.

Then she addressed herself to Nathan: 'You will watch my brother, will you not, until I come back? If he should return to consciousness, he will be glad to find you near him.' Without waiting for a reply, she left the room quietly, but soon returned, prepared to act nurse to the wounded man.

As Nathan raised his eyes, he thought he had never seen anything so charming before; nothing of which he had read could exceed the womanly gentleness and loveliness of that fair face; and his own flushed with shame as he allowed his eyes to dwell upon it longer than in his opinion was consistent with good breeding. 'And at such a time,' said Nathan to himself, as he again bent over the prostrate form.

Gertrude had brought with her an aged servant who had nursed them, and still remained an inmate of the Hall. In spite of the changes produced by time and the circumstances under which she now saw him, Nurse Goodall recognised Bertram at once, and her agitation was extreme; for being fully acquainted with every circumstance connected with his flight, she argued that there could be but one termination to this rash proceeding on the part of Colonel Lindsay—the expulsion of the son now lying at the point of death from his father's roof; for she knew full well the obstinate character of the Squire of Linden, and blamed the Colonel for thus precipitating the end.

As yet, no one in the Hall knew anything further than that the son of the house had returned desperately wounded, and that Colonel Lindsay and Nathan had brought him home; all the rest was mystery unfathomable. At this juncture, the surgeon, Dr Downes, entered the room in a little trepidation, his visits to the Hall being rare, and this message having been sudden and brief. The surgeon perceived a complicated case, and made an examination of his patient. This done, he inquired if any person was present to whom the injured man was thoroughly accustomed. Colonel Lindsay mentioned Nathan and himself. The surgeon then requested Gertrude and the servants to retire, and proposed to wait with Nathan the advent of the physician, who had been telegraphed for. Colonel Lindsay, promising to introduce Dr Ferris directly he arrived, left the room also, and taking Gertrude on his arm, sought the Squire, who was still in conversation with his eldest daughter. Patricia and her father received him coldly, and positively declined to see Bertram.

'Charles,' said the Colonel, 'I have much to tell you, which had better be said privately. Will you give me a few minutes in your library?' The tone was so full of meaning, that the Squire rose and led the way. The result of their conference will be shewn in the conclusion of our narrative.

THE SALT MARSHES OF BRITTANY.

Nor the least interesting part of France is the wide range of country watered by the Loire. It is here that feudal and historic remains may best be studied; fine old castles, palaces, and abbeys rise before the traveller on all sides. The gloomy Blois, where those arch enemies of French liberty the Guises, were assassinated; the castellated den of Plessis-les-Tours, where Louis XI. carried out his deep-laid schemes, so well described in *Quentin Durward*; and the high towers and deep vaults of Amboise, which tell of many a tragic conspiracy and massacre. Here too is the picturesque Châteauneuf, with its rich ceilings and tapestry, where Mary Queen of Scots passed some happy days in her sad life, and Francis I. drew around him his joyous court. Joan of Arc unfurled her banner in this interesting province; and the heroic Vendéens lie buried by thousands, martyrs to their religion and their king. It is a bright sunny land; the acacia hedges divide the fields with their elegant white blossoms; the vineyards are loaded with purple grapes, the apple orchards give abundance of cider; a lazy kind of land

where the idler may kill time to his heart's content. Yet the Loire cannot boast of equal beauty with the Seine; its raging waters inundate the country in winter, leaving dry shoals in summer; and near its mouth, the district called the Marais is an uninteresting tract of sand, salt marshes, and ponds. It is of this unpromising scene that we would write, where ten thousand persons find occupation in the making of salt.

The interest attaching to the people arises from their extreme simplicity. Thanks to the salubrity of the country, they are a fine hardy race, the men tall and well-proportioned, the women celebrated for their fresh complexions. Watch them as they work in the salt-fields carrying heavy loads on their heads, barefoot, in short petticoats, and running rather than walking on the edge of the ponds. But all this is changed on grand fine days, when the costume of their forefathers in past centuries is worn. It is called the marriage dress, as it is first donned by the women on that day. Since it must last for a lifetime, it is carefully laid aside for special occasions. There is the embroidered cap and white handkerchief for the shoulders, edged with lace; the belt and bodice stitched with gold thread. A gay violet petticoat is partially covered by a white dress, the sleeves of which are either red or white; and an apron of yellow or red silk adds to the smart attire. The red stockings are embroidered, and the violet sandals cover well-shaped feet. As for the bridegroom to this pretty bride, he adorns himself with a brown cloth shirt, a muslin collar, full knickerbockers, and no less than two waistcoats, one white, the other blue, with a large black cloth mantle over all. To complete his toilet there is a three-cornered hat with velvet cords, white embroidered stockings, and white buckskin shoes. Such is the costume of Bourg-de-Batz; but each village has its own distinctive coiffure. The burning summer sun, whose rays are reflected from the salt marshes as if from a lens, forces all to wear wide-brimmed hats for daily work; the high winds and great changes of temperature necessitating double or triple woollen waistcoats; yet even this time-honoured style of dress has something picturesque about it.

Let us cross to the left bank of the Loire, and ascend the hill into the little town of Pellerin, justly proud of its position and commanding views. From this vantage-ground the eye passes over the indented coast-line where the points of Mesquer, Croisic, and many others advance into the sea. The green pastures and pretty villas of Saint Etienne form the foreground to the barren reaches of the salt district, which extends towards Morbihan, occupying about six thousand acres. The commercial centre of the country is the town of Guérande, perched on a hill, and belonging to a long past age. Its high ramparts, built for defence in troublous times, can only be entered by four gates, which bear the marks of portcullises. Enormous trees entirely conceal it from the traveller, who would fancy he was approaching a green forest, instead of an old fortified place belonging to feudal times. Vines and cereals grow admirably on the higher ground surrounding it, to the very verge of the salt marshes, which are utterly bare. Looking towards the sea, the marks of its fury are apparent, as if Nature wished to collect all her weapons of defence for the inhabitants. Gigantic rocks of capricious forms, some-

times rising like a bundle of lances; sometimes lying on the shore, as if they were Egyptian sphinxes, or lions turned into stone, and polished by the waves; or even resembling these very waves petrified in a moment on some tempestuous day.

Nothing is more easy to describe than a salt marsh. Imagine a market-garden divided into squares; but instead of the green vegetables, each square filled with water, and the walks not level with, but raised above the spaces about ten inches in height. The parallelograms are termed in the vernacular *cillets*. These are filled with seawater, which pours in through *éconduits* at high-tide, the water having been stored during a period of from fifteen to thirty days, in reservoirs attached to each marsh. The system of canals through which it passes is of a complicated nature; and the production of the salt constitutes, so to speak, a special branch of agriculture, where the visible help of man assists the hidden work of Nature. The ground must be dug and arranged in a particular manner, that the saline particles may crystallise, just as a field where wheat grows and ripens. Thus, it is not surprising that the salt-workers adopt the professional terms of the farmers. At certain times they say 'The marsh is in flower; they speak of the 'harvest' and of 'reaping the salt.'

It is in the *cillet*, where the water is only about an inch in depth, that the salt forms, thanks to the evaporation of the sun, and to the current which, slowly circulating through the different compartments, assists the evaporation. The salt which then falls to the bottom of the basin is raked out by the *paludier* into round hollows made at the edge at certain distances. This is done every one or two days. The art consists in raking up all the salt without drawing the mud with it. In the salt marsh of Guérande they collect separately a white salt, which forms on the surface under the appearance of foam, and is used for the salting of sardines.

It will easily be understood that everything depends on the sky; above all things, the heat of the solar rays is necessary. In cloudy weather there is no crystallisation. Rainy seasons are most disastrous for the *paludiers*. The harvest varies from year to year; but calculating the produce for ten years, it amounts to three or four thousand pounds of salt in each *cillet*. Work begins in the month of June, and is carried on till October. The number of *cillets* varies with the size of the marsh; that of Guérande contains about twenty-four thousand; others are much less. The gathered salt is carried daily to some slope near and packed in a conical form, very much resembling the tents of a camp when seen from a distance. At Guérande the women are seen running in this direction, carrying the salt on their heads in large wooden bowls, holding about fifty pounds; whilst at Bourgneuf the men are employed, who make use of willow-baskets borne on the shoulder. If the salt is sold immediately, the cone is only covered with a little earth. But it more frequently happens that when the harvest is good, speculators buy large quantities to keep until the price rises, and then large masses a thousand pounds in weight are formed, and protected by a thick layer of earth.

Like all kinds of property in France, the salt

marshes are much divided. More than three thousand proprietors share that of Guérande; and there is a kind of co-operative partnership between the owner and the worker, the latter generally receiving a quarter of the profits, out of which he pays the porters. The gain is, however, miserably small; and the wonder is how the various families manage to exist upon it. Even if the wife and daughter help, the whole family only earn about two hundred and fifty-five francs a year—ten pounds of our money; and in consequence of the season when the salt is collected, the *paludier* has no chance of increasing his income by assisting the farmers, and can only employ himself in the trifling labours of winter. So low, indeed, have the profits sunk, that in some marshes the expenses have exceeded them; in short there is no kind of property in France that has for the last century undergone more terrible reverses than this. These changes are partly due to the railways, which have provided a much more efficient and rapid means of transport for the east of France than for the west.

There are three large zones in the country where salt is found. In the eastern district it is derived from springs and mines; but in the present day the salt mines are treated like the springs. Instead of dividing the lumps with the pickaxe, galleries are cut through and flooded with water; when this is sufficiently saturated, it is brought to the surface and evaporated in heated caldrons. The aid of the sun is not required; fine or rainy days do not count, and the making of salt becomes a trade for all the year round. In the south the plan is varied, because there is no tide in the Mediterranean Sea. Here, by the help of a mechanical apparatus, the sea-water is pumped into enormous squares, where it crystallises, and the evaporation is accelerated by a continual circulation. With a warm temperature and a cloudless sky, the water requires to be renewed only at intervals, whilst the salt itself is not collected until the end of summer. Thus the poor workmen of Brittany have a more laborious and less remunerative task, though the salt is acknowledged to be of a finer quality.

The family life is necessarily of a very hard and parsimonious character. It is impossible to buy animal food; a thin soup supplies the morning and evening repast, with poorly cooked potatoes at mid-day. Those who are near the sea can add the sardine and common shell-fish, which are not worth the trouble of taking into the towns to sell. The cruel proverb, 'Who sleeps, dines,' finds here its literal application; during the winter the people lie in bed all the day to save a meal. There is a strong family affection apparent among them, the father exercising a patriarchal authority in the much-loved home. If they go away, it is never for more than twenty leagues, to sell the salt from door to door. Driving before them their indefatigable mules, borne down at starting with too heavy a load, they penetrate through the devious narrow lanes, knowing the path to every hamlet or farmhouse where they hope to meet with a customer.

The population of Bourg-de-Batz is said to be a branch of the Saxon race, and has hitherto been so jealous of preserving an unbroken genealogy that marriages are always made among themselves. A union with a stranger is felt to be a misalli-

ance. There are some local customs still remaining which point to an ancient origin, a visible legacy of paganism perpetuated to the present day. Such is the festival which is celebrated at Croisic in the month of August in honour of Hirmen, a pagan divinity in the form of a stone with a wide base lying near the sea. Here, with grotesque movements, the women execute round the stone a sort of sacred dance, and every young girl who is unfortunate enough to touch it is certain not to be married during the year. There is an old chapel of St Goustan which shews the tenacity with which the people hold to their traditions. Once a place for pilgrimages, it has not been used for sacred purposes during seventy years, and serves as a magazine for arms. Yet the inhabitants of Batz visit it yearly, and especially pray beneath the sacred walls at Whitsuntide.

Sunday is strictly kept as a day of rest from their toils; then the poorest dress in clean clothes, men, women, and children going in family groups to church. After that, relations and neighbours pay visits. Man is no longer a beast of burden, but shews that he has a heart and a conscience; a happy spirit of good temper and frankness reigns everywhere. Indeed the high moral qualities of the natives, their love of education, and strong attachment to their native soil, make them a vigorous branch of the French nation, and one calculated to gain the traveller's respect.

CRITICAL ODDITIES.

THAT short pithy criticisms are occasionally as pointed as those that are more elaborated, may be gleaned from the following, which we call at random for the amusement of our readers.

A little calculation would have saved a well-known novelist being taken to task by a fair graduate of Elmira College, who thus relieved her mind by writing as follows to the College magazine: 'In a novel of Miss Braddon's, a book of wonderful plot and incident, the hero, after coming to grief in a civilised country, went to Australia to make his fortune; and while yet an apprentice at the pick and shovel, found an immense nugget of gold, which he hid, now in one place, now in another, and finally, was obliged to carry in his under-shirt pocket for weeks. When he reached home its sale made him immensely rich. I had a little curiosity in the matter, and obtaining the current price of gold, found, by a simple computation, that the nugget must have weighed a hundred and ninety-four pounds. A sizeable pocket that must have been!'

Albert Smith had his pronouns criticised in the following neat way by Thackeray. Turning over the leaves of a young lady's album, Thackeray came upon the following lines:

Mont Blanc is the Monarch of Mountains—
They crowned him long ago;
But who they got to put on,

Nobody seems to know.—ALBERT SMITH.

And wrote underneath:

I know that Albert wrote in a hurry:
To criticise I scarce presume;
But yet methinks that Lindley Murray,
Instead of 'who,' had written 'whom.'
W. M. THACKERAY.

Not quite so good-naturedly did Chorley treat

Patmore's *Angel in the House*, in his critical verses: 'The gentle reader we apprise, That this new Angel in the House, Contains a tale, not very wise. About a parson and a spouse. The author, gentle as a lamb, Has managed his rhymes to fit; He haply fancies he has writ Another *In Memoriam*. How his intended gathered flowers, And took her tea, and after sung, Is told in style somewhat like ours, For delectation of the young.' Then after giving 'some little pictures' in the poet's own language, the cruel critic went on—'From ball to bed, from field to farm, The tale flows nicely purling on; With much conceit there is no harm, In the love-legend here begun. The rest will come some other day, If public sympathy allows; And this is all we have to say About the Angel in the House.'

This hardly amounted to faint praise, a kind of encouragement Mr Buckstone owned had a very depressing effect upon him when he ranked among youthful aspirants to theatrical honours. 'I was,' said the comedian, 'given by my manager a very good part to act, which being received by the public with roars of laughter, I considered that my future was made. A worthy vendor of newspapers, a great critic and patron of the drama, asked me for an order. On giving him one, I called the next day expecting to hear a flattering account of my performance, but was disappointed. Determined to learn what effect my acting had produced on him, I nervously put the question: "Did you see me last night?" to which he replied: "O yes." "Well," said I, "were you pleased?" And he again replied with his "O yes." I then came to the point with: "Did you like my acting?" And he rejoined: "O yes; you made me smile."

A more appreciative critic was the lady who after seeing Garrick and Barry severally play Romeo, observed that in the garden scene, Garrick's looks were so animated and his gestures so spirited, that had she been Juliet she should have thought Romeo was going to jump up to her; but that Barry was so tender, melting, and persuasive, that had she been Juliet she should have jumped down to him.

An old seaman after looking long at the picture of 'Rochester from the River,' cried: 'Yes, that's it—just opposite old Staunton's, where I served my time—just as it used to look when I was a youngster no higher than my stick. It's forty years since I saw the old place; but if the *Nave* would only clear off, I could point out every house!'

When M. Gondinet's *Free* was produced at the Porte St Martin Theatre, a Parisian critic commended the playwright for rendering a good deal of the dialogue inaudible by a liberal employment of muskets and cannon; and then conjoined *Free* thus: 'I am free to go to the play; thou art free to be bored by the first act; he or she is free to be bored by act second; we are free to be bored by the third; you are free to be bored still more by the fourth and fifth acts; and they are free to stay away for the future.'

M. Gondinet's drama was seemingly as fitting a subject for the pruning-knife as the play of which Mark Twain, speaking for himself and partner, deposed: 'The more we cut out of it, the better it got along. We cut out, and cut out, and cut out; and I do believe this would be one of the best

plays in the world to-day, if our strength had held out, and we could have gone on and cut out the rest of it.'

An Ohio politician 'on the stump,' stayed the torrent of his eloquence for a moment, and looking round with a self-satisfied air, put the question: 'Now, gentlemen, what do you think?' A voice from the crowd replied: 'Well, Mr Speaker, if you ask me, I think, sir, I do indeed, that if you and me were to stump the state together, we could tell more lies than any other two men in the country, sir; and I'd not say a word myself, sir, all the time.' The orator must have felt as grateful as the actor whose impersonation of the hero of *Escaped from Sing-Sing* impelled a weary pittance to proclaim aloud that the play would have been better 'if that chap hadn't escaped from Sing-Sing;' or the Opera tenor whose first solo elicited from Pat in the upper regions the despairing ejaculation: 'Och, my eighteen-pence!'

A young negro, carefully conducting an old blind woman through the Philadelphia Exhibition, stopped in front of a statue of Cupid and Psyche, and thus enlightened his sightless companion: 'Dis is a white mammy and her babby, and dey has just got no clo' onto 'em at all, and he is a-kissin' of her like mischief, to be shuah. I's kind o' glad you can't see 'em, 'cause you'd be flustered like, 'cause dey don't stay in de house till dey dresses deyselves. All dese figures seem to be scarce o' clo', but dey is mighty pooty, only dey be too white to be any 'lation to you and me, mammy.' Then turning to a statue in bronze: 'Dere be one nigger among 'em which is crying over a handkerchief. Dey call him Othello. Mabbe his mother is dead, and he can't fetch her to de show, poor fellow!'

An American officer riding by the bronze statue of Henry Clay in Canal Street, New Orleans, was asked by his Irish orderly if the New Orleans 'follers' were so fond of niggers that they put a statue of one in their 'fashionablest' street. 'That's not a nigger, Tom; that's the great Clay statue,' said the amused officer. Tom rode round the statue, dismounted, climbed upon the pedestal, examined the figure closely, and then said: 'Did they tell yez it was clay? It looks to me like iron!'

Tom's ignorance was more excusable than that of the Yankee who, learning on inquiry that the colossal equestrian figure in Union Square, New York, was 'General Washington, the father of his country,' observed: 'It is! I never heard of him before; but there is one thing about him I do like—he does set a horse plaguy well.' A compliment to the artist, at all events.

Perhaps Salvini took it as a compliment when his Othello was compared to the awakening fury of the Hyrcanian tiger disturbed at his feast of blood, and his Hamlet described as 'a magnificent hoodlum on his muscle, with a big mad on, smashing things generally;' and the Boston actress was delighted to know her 'subtle grace, flexible as the sinuosities of a morning mist, yet thoroughly proportioned to the curves of the character, was most especially noticeable.' But the Hungarian prima donna must have felt a little dubious as to the intentions of the critic who wrote of her: 'Her voice is wonderful. She runs up and down the scale with the agility of an experienced cat running up and down a house-top, and two or

three fences thrown in. She turns figurative flip-flaps on every bar, tearing up the thermometer to away above two hundred and twelve, and sliding down again so far below zero that one feels chilled to the bone.' The fair singer would probably have preferred something in this style: 'Miss — wore a rich purple suit with a handsome shade of lavender, a white over-garment, tight-fitting, with flowing sleeves, and a white bonnet trimmed with the same shades of purple and lavender, and she sang finely.'

That has the merit of being intelligible. The writer was not in such a desperate condition as the Memphis theatrical reporter who lauded an actress as 'intense yet expansive, comprehensive yet particular, fervid without faultiness; glowing and still controlled, natural but refined, daring anything, fearing nothing but to violate grace; pure as dew, soft as the gush of distant music, gentle as a star beaming through the riven clouds. With mystery of charms she comes near to us, and melts down our admiration into love; but when we take her to us as something familiar and delicious, she floats away to the far heights of fame, and looks down on our despair with countenance of peaceful lustre and smiles as sweet as spring.' If the lady did not reciprocate, her heart must have been of adamant.

THE WELL-KNOWN SPOT.

AGAIN with joy I view the waking shore,
Where mem'ries live for ever in their green,
And from the solemn graveyard's checkered floor
Gaze fondly o'er the all-enchanting scene.

The same sad rocks awake their moeking cries,
And drooping willows weep the early grave,
As o'er the dead the restless spirit flies,
Tries vainly yet, you broken heart to save.

But, hush! and soul, nor leave this hallowed spot,
Where peaceful slumber seals the closed eye,
The lonely sleeper now awaken not
By the rude raving, or the deep-drawn sigh.

Oh, let me mourn (the fainting heart replies),
These new-made graves, which take my wond'ring sight;
Say, who beneath this little tombstone lies,
Or who this Angel guards through the long night.

When last I saw, no mounds lay heaving there,
No sexton rude had turned the resting sod.
Alas, how changed! The holy and the fair
Have sunk in death, and triumphed in their God.

Then let me pause, if here my Maker stays,
And guards his saints from the inhuman foe.
His word is true; my trembling heart obeys;
Bless'd are the dead who to the Saviour go.

Now now refulgence breathes o'er all the scene;
Yon lark's sweet warble now is sweeter still;
Yon bladey grass stands out in purer green;
And softer music tinkles from the rill.

For why? O mark! The cause is written here;
The pale-faced marble tells the softened tale,
That sweeteneth the sigh, arrests the starting tear,
And lulls to silence the untimely wail.

ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.

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THE STORY OF THIERS.

In a densely populated street of the quaint sea-port of Marseilles there dwelt a poor locksmith and his family, who were so hard pressed by the dearth of provisions and the general hardness of the times, that the rent and taxes for the wretched tenement which they called a home had been allowed to fall many weeks into arrear. But the good people struggled on against their poverty; and the locksmith (who was the son of a ruined cloth-merchant), though fallen to the humble position of a dock-porter, still managed to wade through life as if he had been born to opulence. This poor labourer's name was Thiers, and his wife was a descendant of the poet Chenier; the two being destined to become the parents of Louis Adolphe Thiers, one of the most remarkable men that ever lived.

The hero of our story was at his birth mentally consigned to oblivion by his parents, while the neighbours laughed at the ungainly child, and prognosticated for him all kinds of evil in the future. And it is more than probable that these evil auguries would have been fulfilled had it not been for the extraordinary care bestowed upon him by his grandmother. But for her, perhaps our story had never been written.

Under her fostering care the child survived all those diseases which were, according to the gossips, to prove fatal to him; but while his limbs remained almost stationary, his head and chest grew larger, until he became a veritable dwarf. By his mother's influence with the family of André Chenier, the lad was enabled to enter the Marseilles Lyceum at the age of nine; and here the remarkable head and chest kept the promise they made in his infancy, and soon fulfilled Madame Thiers' predictions.

Louis Adolphe Thiers was a brilliant though somewhat erratic pupil. He was noted for his practical jokes, his restlessness, and the ready and ingenious manner in which he always extricated himself from any scrapes into which his bold and restless disposition had led him. Thus the child

in this case would appear to have been 'father to the man,' by the manner in which he afterwards released his beloved country from one of the greatest 'scrapes' she ever experienced.

On leaving school Thiers studied for the law, and was eventually called to the bar, though he never practised as a lawyer. He became instead a local politician; and so well did the rôle suit him, that he soon evinced a strong desire to try his fortune in Paris itself. He swayed his auditory, when speaking, in spite of his diminutive stature, Punch-like physiognomy, and shrill piping speech; and shout and yell as his adversaries might, they could not drown his voice, for it arose clear and distinct above all the hubbub around him. While the studious youth was thus making himself a name in his native town, he was ever on the watch for an opportunity to transfer his fortunes to the capital. His almost penniless condition, however, precluded him from carrying out his design without extraneous assistance of some kind or other; but when such a stupendous ambition as that of governing one of the greatest nations of the earth filled the breast of the Marseilles student, it was not likely that the opportunity he was seeking would be long in coming.

The Academy of Aix offered a prize of a few hundred francs for a eulogium on *Favencarques*, and here was the opportunity which Louis Adolphe Thiers required. He determined to compete for the prize, and wrote out two copies of his essay, one of which he sent to the Academy's Secretary, and the other he submitted to the judgment of his friends. This latter indiscretion, however, would appear to have been the cause of his name being mentioned to the Academicians as a competitor; and as they had a spite against him, and disapproved of his opinions, they decided to reject any essay which he might submit to them.

On the day of the competition they were as good as their word, and Thiers received back his essay with only an 'honourable mention' attached to it. The votes, however, had been equally divided, and the principal prize could not be adjudged until the next session. The future

statesman and brilliant journalist was not, however, to be cast aside in this contemptuous manner, and he accordingly adopted a *ruse de guerre*, which was perfectly justifiable under the circumstances. He sent back his first essay for the second competition with his own name attached thereto, and at the same time transmitted another essay, by means of a friend, through the Paris post-office. This paper was signed 'Louis Duval'; and as M. Thiers knew that they had resolved to reject his essay and accept the next best on the list, he made it as near as possible equal to the other in point of merit.

The Academicians were thoroughly out-generalled by this clever artifice, and the prize was awarded to the essay signed 'Louis Duval'; but the chagrin of the dons when the envelope was opened and the name of Louis Adolphe Thiers was read out, can be better imagined than described. The prize, which amounted to about twenty pounds, was added to another sum of forty-pounds gained by his friend Mignet for essay-writing; and with this modest amount, the two friends set out on their journey to Paris. On their arrival there, both of them were at once engaged as writers on the *Globe* newspaper, and M. Thiers' articles soon attracted such attention that the highest political destinies were predicted for their author.

Alluding to the small stature of our hero, Prince Talleyrand once said: '*Il est petit, mais il grandira!*' (He is little, but he will be great!) Meanwhile, the young adventurer, as we may call him, was engaged on general literary work for the press, writing political leaders one day, art-criticisms the next, and so on, until a publisher asked him to write the *History of the French Revolution*. He accepted; and when published, the work met with so great a success that it placed him in the front rank of literature, and gained for him the proud title of 'National Historian.' After this the two friends published the *National* newspaper, an undertaking which we are told was conceived in Talleyrand's house, and was largely subscribed to by the Duke of Orleans, afterwards King-Louis-Philippe. M. Thiers disliked the Bourbons; and when, in 1829, Charles X. dissolved a liberal parliament, he took the lead in agitating for the reinstating of the people's rights. The king, having determined to reply to the re-election of the '221' by a *coup d'état*, the nature of which was secretly communicated to M. Thiers, the latter hastened to the office of the *National* and drew up the celebrated Protest of the Journalists, which before noon was signed by every writer on the liberal side. As M. Thiers was leaving the office, a servant of Prince Talleyrand placed in his hand a note, which simply bore the words, 'Go and gather cherries.' This was a hint that danger was near the young patriot, and that he should repair to the house of one of the Prince's friends at Montmorency—a place famous for its cherries—and there lie hidden until the storm had blown over.

M. Thiers did not immediately accept the hint, but remained in the capital during the day, to watch the course of events and endeavour to prevent his friends from doing anything rash. He energetically sought to dissuade those who were for resisting the king's decree by force of arms; but did not succeed. When the barricades were raised, he left Paris, because he thought that the people were

doing an unwise thing, which would lead to a fearful slaughter, and perhaps result in himself and friends being shot.

When, however, the battle between the army and the people had really begun, the indomitable little man returned to Paris, and heedless of the bullets that were flying about, he ran here and there trying to collect adherents for the Duke of Orleans. He also had a proclamation of the Duke, as king, printed, rushed out with it, damp as it was from the press, and distributed copies to the victorious insurgents; but this operation nearly cost him his life, for the crowds on the Place de la Bourse were shouting for a republic, and a cry was immediately raised to lynch M. Thiers. He only escaped by dashing into a pastry-cook's shop, and taking a header down the open cellar which led to the kitchen.

Nothing daunted by this *contretemps*, however, he sought out M. Scheffer, an intimate friend of the Duke of Orleans, and started off for Neuilly with him (without consulting anybody else), to offer the crown of France to the Duke. When they found the Duke, he despatched M. Thiers to Prince Talleyrand to ask his advice on the subject; and the latter, who was in bed at the time, said: 'Let him accept'; but positively refused to put this advice in writing. Thus the Duke of Orleans became King of the French under the name of Louis-Philippe, and the Marseilles student found himself a step nearer the accomplishment of his aim. The poor locksmith's son had overthrown one king and established another!

It was M. Thiers who caused the remains of Napoleon to be removed from the gloomy resting-place in St Helena to the church of the Invalides in Paris, where they were re-interred amid great pomp and circumstance. He it was who also invented or gave currency to the now well-known constitutional maxim, 'The king reigns, but does not govern.'

In this reign M. Thiers commenced his great work on the *Consulate and the Empire*, in which he so eulogised the First Napoleon and flattered the military fame of France, that he unwittingly paved the way for the advent of the second Empire.

The revolution of 1848, which led to the abdication of Louis-Philippe, found Thiers but a simple soldier in the National Guard, and parading the streets with a musket on his shoulder, despite his diminutive stature. A man of his transcendent ability, however, could not be left long in so humble a position, and we therefore find the newly elected sovereign Louis Napoleon trying hard to win over to his side this unique citizen. But Thiers declined the honour, and remained a thorn in Napoleon's side during the whole period of his reign. When the *coup d'état* of 1851 was struck he was one of the leading statesmen whose arrest was ordered and carried out. The patriot was seized and forcibly taken out of his bed at an early hour in the morning, and imprisoned at Mazas for several days. He was then escorted out of the country, and became an exile from the land he loved so well.

While the excitement in Paris, which culminated in the outbreak of the war with Germany, was at its height, and the whole nation was singing the *Marseillaise* and shouting 'À Berlin,' M. Thiers' voice was the only one raised to protest against France precipitating herself into an unjust and

unnecessary war. He was unheeded at the moment; but a few weeks sufficed to prove the soundness of his reasoning; and when the Germans were marching on Paris, it was to the locksmith's son that the whole nation turned in its distress.

The Napoleonic dynasty was deposed, and at the elections for the National Assembly which afterwards took place, M. Thiers was elected for twenty-six Departments—a splendid national testimony to his patriotism and ability. As soon as the Assembly met he was at once appointed 'Chief of the Executive Power' of the French Republic. Thus the poor student of the Marseilles Academy had become, almost without any effort of his own, the governor of his country; and how he acquitted himself of the onerous and self-sacrificing task, let the living grief of Frenchmen for his loss at this moment proudly attest.

Previous to this appointment, however, and while the German army was thundering at the gates of Paris, the brave old statesman had, in his seventy-fourth year, shewn his unalterable devotion to France by the famous journey he made to all the European courts to endeavour to obtain assistance. Failing in this, he came back, and being made President, as above mentioned, he made peace with the Germans on the best terms he could get, turned round and beat the Communists in the streets of Paris; and within three short years he had not only paid the heaviest war indemnity ever known, but had cleared his country of the Germans, consolidated her resources, and reorganised her army.

On the morning of the 4th September last, France was suddenly plunged into the deepest grief, and dismay by the announcement that her greatest citizen had been taken from her by death on the previous evening, at a time when the whole nation was looking to him as the one man who could save it from the dangerous crisis through which it was at that moment passing.

The funeral was a magnificent one, and though a wet day, there was not a citizen in Paris that did not join the throng, which lined the whole of the way to the cemetery. As the body of the great patriot was borne along every hat was raised, and many among the crowd shed tears. A riot was expected on the occasion, but the people behaved admirably and with great forbearance; the greatest tribute of respect which they could have shewn to the memory of one who had done so much for his country.

The modesty of this great citizen was in perfect accordance with his republican principles; for while President of the French Republic, his card never bore anything more on it than the simple 'Monsieur Thiers'; nor did he wear any uniform or decoration other than that one which is so dear to the heart and eye of every true Frenchman, 'the Legion of Honour.' Surely never did a worthier breast bear that famous Cross than that of the man who, despite every obstacle both physical and moral, and despite evil prognostications, bitter taunts, and the crushing hand of poverty, rose by the grand yet simple force of his own indomitable will from the position of a labourer's son to that of the ruler of a mighty nation. But even greater than all this was the fact, that having attained to this grand position he was ready, at what he believed to be the call of duty, to lay aside his dignity, to step from

his proud position, and once more to assume the humbler rôle of a private citizen. Such a sublime act of self-abnegation was sufficient to assure to him the enthusiastic love and respect of an intelligent people, and the esteem of the whole world, which may be said to have joined with France in weaving a chaplet of immortelles to place upon the tomb of one whose memory will be revered by all who respect indomitable perseverance and true nobility of character.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER III.—THE LETTER.

WHEN Sir Sykes, left alone, addressed himself to the perusal of the crumpled letter which he had hitherto crushed in his clenched hand, it was with no light repugnance that he applied himself to the task. Slowly, and with shuffling fingers, he unfolded and smoothed the flaked paper, spread it on the table before him, and not hastily, but with a deliberate care that was evidently painful to him, read as follows: 'Although a stranger to you, Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet, I am no stranger to what took place on March 24, 18—'. Should you wish this matter to remain, as it has hitherto done, untalked of by the world, I must request that you will meet me this evening at *The Traveller's Rest*, by the cross-roads. I shall wait there for you until ten o'clock to-night, and will then name the terms on which alone you can reckon on my future silence.—Inquire for yours respectfully, DICK HORN, staying at *The Traveller's Rest*.'

The baronet read and re-read this letter with the patient endurance of a sufferer under the surgeon's knife. Nothing but his labouring breath and the deepening of the lines around his mouth and the furrows on his high forehead, betrayed the pain that this precious document, indited in a large sprawling hand, occasioned him. When he had gone through it for the second time, he rose, and filling a glass with water from a bottle that stood on a side-table, he drank a deep draught, and then paced to and fro with hasty irregular steps, as some men do when suddenly called upon for earnest thought and prompt decision.

'I will not go!' he said authoritatively, but in a low voice.—'I will not go.'

Such a peremptory summons as that which he had received implied more than it stated. It was couched in terms which were sufficiently civil; but the tone was still that of command, not of entreaty or persuasion. Most gentlemen of the degree of Sir Sykes would have treated such a demand either as a piece of insufferable insolence or as the freak of a madman. The baronet knew well enough what sort of reception his neighbours, Lord Wolverhampton, Carew of Carew, or Fulford of Carstennis, would have given to a request so impudent. He was, as they were, a justice of the peace and deputy-lieutenant, owner of a fine estate, one whose name was mentioned with respect wherever men did congregate.

The meekest of us all are apt to rebel against unwarranted dictation. And Sir Sykes was not meek. His friends and his servants—lynx-eyed

as we are apt to be to the foibles of others—knew that he was in his unobtrusive way a proud man. The stronger, therefore, must have been the influence that drew him, as the magnet draws iron to itself, towards that unsavoury house of entertainment whence his unknown correspondent had dated his missive. The first dressing-bell clanged out its call unheeded, and it was only when the second bell rang that Sir Sykes recalled his wandering thoughts sufficiently to remember that it was time for him to dress, and that whatever cares might be busy at his heart, he must yet wear his mask decorously before the world. Dinner on that day at Carbery Court was not a peculiarly genial meal. The baronet had taken, with his accustomed regularity, his place at the table; but he was pale, and looked older by some years than he had done a few hours since. Yet he resented Lucy's half-timid inquiry: 'You are not ill, papa, I hope?' and quietly declared that he was perfectly well. The domestic relations differ so much in varying conditions of life, that there are parents whose every thought and deed appear to be the common property of the home circle, and others who sanction no trespass on the inner self, the *to auton* of the Greeks, which each of us carries in the recesses of his own heart.

Sir Sykes Denzil was one of those men who, as husband and father, never carry their confidences beyond a certain convenient limit. He was no tyrant, and his daughters, who fondly loved him and who believed in his love for them, looked with regret on the cloud that so often rested on his yet handsome features. But he had known how to preserve his jealously guarded individuality from the encroachments of affectionate interference, so that it was but very rarely that his actions were the theme of open comment. Blanche and Lucy, therefore, though with feminine nicety of observation they noted that their father could not eat, but that he emptied his glass again and again, said nothing; while Jasper, as he watched Sir Sykes with a stealthy inquisitiveness, made the mental reflection that 'the governor must be hard hit, very hard indeed;' and secretly determined to turn the occasion to his own peculiar profit.

'Jasper!' said Lucy anxiously, some time after the dinner had come to an end; 'what is the matter with papa? Do you know if he is really unwell, or if anything has gone wrong? I waited here for you, in case you might know what is amiss.'

Jasper, who had been intercepted as he was leaving the house for his customary twilight stroll, with a cigar between his lips, turned lazily round. 'How can I tell, Lucy?' he returned indifferently. 'I'm not the keeper of my father's conscience, as the Lord Chancellor, by a polite fiction, is supposed to be of the king's.'

'I only meant, has anything occurred, to your knowledge,' pleaded Miss Denzil, 'calculated to annoy or distress him? Anything, for instance, about you?'

'How about me!' demanded Jasper with a slight start and a slight frown.

'Don't be angry, brother; I only meant, dear, about your—debts,' answered the girl, laying her hand on Jasper's arm.

'Has he been talking to you on that delightful subject?' retorted the brother, almost roughly. 'No; I see that he has not; at least not very lately.'

One would think, to hear that eternal refrain of debts, debts, debts for ever jangling in my ears, that I was the first fellow who ever overran the constable. Surely I'm punished enough, if I *did* owe a trifle, by being caged up in this wearisome old Bastille of a house, and— There, there; Lucy, don't cry. I'll not say a word more against Carbery, and you may set your mind at rest. If the governor has anything to vex him, be assured that it is not in the least connected with so insignificant a person as myself.' And, as though weary of the subject, he sauntered off.

It was Sir Sykes's habit on most evenings to spend a short time, half an hour or so, in the drawing-room. He liked music; and Blanche, his younger daughter, who had been gifted with the sweet voice and delicate sense of harmony which are often found in conjunction with frail health, knew the airs and the songs that best suited him. He never, under any circumstances, remained long in company with his daughters, being one of those men to whom the society of women is in itself unengaging; but on this particular evening he went straight from the dining-room to the library, and sipped his coffee there, while the twilight deepened into the gloom of night.

The day had been fine enough, but the sun had sunk in a cloud-bank of black and orange, and there were not wanting signs that a change of weather was at hand. The wind had risen, and the clouds gathered as the sun went down, and it seemed as though the proverbial fickleness of our climate would soon be illustrated. But Sir Sykes, as he went forth shortly after the clock on the turret had struck nine, paid no heed to the weather, save that once or twice he glanced upwards with a sort of half-conscious satisfaction at the darkling sky. The night, with its friendly shadows and its threats of a coming storm, suited far better with his purpose than cloudless azure and bright moonlight would have done. The moon, not as yet long risen, was young and wan, and her feeble lustre fell but at rare intervals through the wrack of hurrying clouds. The larches in the plantations quivered and the aspens by the trout-stream trembled as the gusts of wailing wind went by; while the giant trees in the park, each one a citadel of refuge to squirrel and song-bird, sent down a rustling sound, as though every one out of their million leaves had found a tiny voice of its own to give warning of the approaching gale. Sir Sykes skirted the lawn, passed through the shrubbery, and struck into a path seldom trodden except by the feet of his keepers, which led northwards through the park.

There is something ignominious in the very fact that the master of any dwelling, however humble, should steal away from it with as earnest a desire to elude observation as though he had been a robber of hen-roosts or a purloiner of spoons. And perhaps such a proceeding appeared still more so in the case of the owner of so stately a place as Carbery. Sir Sykes felt as he glided, unseen as he hoped, past paling and thicket, at once angry and ashamed. So repugnant to him was the errand on which his mind was bent, that on reaching a private door in the northern wall of the park he came to a halt, and held as it were parley with himself before proceeding on the quest of the writer of the letter.

'I do not know this fellow,' he muttered wrath-

fully: 'the man's very name is strange to me. But the twenty-fourth of March—that can be no mistake, no coincidence. That fatal date has burned itself too deeply into my brain for me to disregard or to forget it. Yes, I must go; I suppose that I must go.'

And with a heavy sigh, the master of that fair demesne and of many a broad acre beyond it felt in his pocket for the key that would open the postern before which he stood, unlocked the door, went out, and reclosed and fastened it behind him. Then, without further hesitation, he entered into a lane, the straggling branches of the hazaels that grew on the high banks to left and right almost brushing against his person as he walked briskly on. So long as he had been within the limits of Carbery Chase, Sir Sykes had done his best to escape notice, keeping as often as he could tree and bush and rising ground between himself and the grand house of which he was absolute proprietor. But now he ceased to turn his head and look or listen for any sign that he was followed, and pushed on, assured that his clandestine exit from Carbery was unknown to any but himself. Sir Sykes, however, was very much mistaken. He was dogged by the very pursuer whom, perhaps, of all others he would have wished to keep in ignorance as to his conduct. Jasper, whose felicitous vigilance, once awakened, could not readily be lulled to sleep, had kept watch upon his father's actions with a quiet patient steadiness which nothing but vengeance or the greed of gain could possibly have inspired. There is a certain sympathy, especially with crooked motives, which enables us to anticipate the stratagems of those with whom we have intercourse, and of this Jasper had his full share.

He was scarcely surprised when from his place of espial he saw his father quit the house and thread his way through the grounds after such a fashion as made it manifest that the baronet desired his excursion to remain a secret to those beneath his roof. That something abnormal should happen as a consequence of the letter which Sir Sykes had received, and the reading of which had so powerfully affected its recipient, the captain had considered as so probable, that he thought it worth his while to lie in wait for the surprisal of the secret. Of two probable hypotheses, Jasper, whose imagination was of a chastened and practical order, had chosen rather to fancy that some stranger would arrive, than that the baronet should himself go forth to meet that stranger. But when he saw his father's tall figure vanish amidst the shadows of the dense evergreens and leafy lime-trees, he was not in the least astonished.

'When it was a question of nobbling the *Black Prince*,' he said meditatively, 'I wouldn't trust myself, nor would Gentleman Pratt, to talking it over anywhere but on Bletchley Downs with the vagabonds who houseed the horse, and who would for a tither have sold their own fathers.'

Some recollection that he, Jasper Denzil, late a captain in Her Majesty's service, was at that moment engaged, so far as in him lay, in the questionable operation of 'selling' his own father, here caused a tingle to his callous heart. But we are seldom without some moral anodyne wherewith to lull to sleep that troublesome monitor, conscience; and Jasper had but need to remember his debts, his difficulties, and the fact that men at his

club spoke of him as 'Poor Denzil—played out, sir!' to assuage the momentary pang which some as yet smouldering sense of honour occasioned to him.

The skill with which he followed Sir Sykes, keeping the object of his pursuit fully in view, yet never for an instant compromising himself by coming into the range of vision, should the baronet, as he often did, turn his head, would have done credit to a Comanche Indian on the war-path. It was by a subtle instinct, not by practice, that he availed himself of the shelter of tree and brake and hollow, until at length, himself unobserved, he made sure that Sir Sykes was heading towards the private door in the northern wall of the park. There was a side-gate kept continually unlocked on account of the right of way, some six hundred yards to the eastward, and from this the captain could issue without difficulty. As for the private door, Sir Sykes had a key to fit its lock; Jasper had none. The latter's mind was instantly made up.

Idle sybarite though he was, the captain was fleet of foot, an accomplishment perhaps more common among languid men about town than healthy hardy dwellers in the country would readily imagine. He had made money once and again by the lightness of his heels, and they did him good service now, as, after a rapid rush across the elastic turf of the park and a quick traversing of the heathery surface of the rugged common-land beyond, he caught a glimpse of his father's stately figure as it passed in between the tall hedges of the lane.

'It's lucky I can run a bit!' gasped out Jasper as he paused for an instant to take breath, and then passing his cambrie handkerchief across his brow, on which the heat-drops stood thickly, plunged into the dark lane between the steep banks of which the object of his pursuit had disappeared. And now his task was the easier, in that Sir Sykes, intent on what lay before him, and confident that his manner of leaving his home was unknown, never once turned his head to look back.

A ghastly sight it was—had human eyes been there to note it—which the wan moon shewed, when at uncertain intervals her white light fell on the pale faces of these two men, father and son, so much and so little alike, who were wending their way thus along the deep Devonshire lane. In front was Sir Sykes, moody indeed and down-cast, but a gentleman of a goodly presence; while behind him came with feline footfall his only son, as craftily eager in the chase as even a garrotter, our British Thug, could have been. Once beyond the lane, the baronet and his kindred spy had to traverse a tract of ragged and desolate common, where the horse-road dwindled to a track of cart-wheels in the peaty soil, and where Jasper felt that concealment would have been difficult, had the baronet but looked behind him.

But the rain, long threatened, came on, urged by the strength of the sobbing wind, and Captain Denzil congratulated himself on the friendly darkness that ensued. Nor was it long before Sir Sykes caught sight of the dead tree, on a knotted bough of which was the signboard of *The Traveller's Rest*, the dilapidated roof and battered front of which could dimly be seen through the gloom of night.

'After all, why not?' ejaculated Jasper, as he

saw his father, after a moment's hesitation, disappear within the ruinous porch of the roadside public-house.

CHAPTER IV.—AT THE TRAVELLER'S REST.

'Person of the name of Hold? I should think so, rather. Want to see him, do you? Turn to your right, then; get up them stone steps, and just keep straight till you're past the water-but, and you'll twig the tap-room door.'

It was a sharp-eyed sharp-tongued boy who spoke, a boy in a tattered jacket that had once been blue, and had once been garnished with brass anchor buttons; but who retained his Cockney accent and his air of brisk effrontery, like that of a London sparrow.

'Can't you make out Her Majesty's English, Mr Stiffback?' said this impudent servitor of *The Traveller's Rest*, seeing that Sir Sykes hesitated.

'You keep a civil tongue, Deputy,' broke in a deeper voice from within the darkling passage. 'This, I suppose, is the gentleman who received a letter from a party called Hold? Very good. This way, sir, please; and mind you don't hurt your head against the beam, for the ceiling's low and light's scarce. So. Here we are; and this is the tap-room, and my name is Hold. At this end of the room we'll be quietest.'

And the baronet passively permitted himself to be led up some stone steps and down some brick steps, and finally into a long low room, at one end of which, although the weather was warm and the season summer, there glowed and crackled a large fire of mingled peat and wood, around which were clustered seven or eight persons male and female, two of whom were smoking short discoloured pipes, while the others were conversing in hoarse tones, or sniffing, with somewhat of a wolfish expression of countenance, the savoury fumes that arose from a frying-pan which a gaunt man in frowsy black was carefully holding over the hottest part of the fire.

There was a low wooden screen or partition, about breast-high, which stretched across some three-fourths of this delectable apartment, which was rudely furnished with some wooden settles and rush-bottomed chairs, and a couple of greasy tables, vamped and clamped with sheet-iron to repair the injury which excitable customers had done to the woodwork.

'My name, Sir Sykes, is Hold,' said the owner of the name, when the baronet had taken his seat on one of the mean-looking chairs, and his singular correspondent had placed himself on one of the benches opposite.

'I never heard it before, nor, to the best of my recollection, have we ever met,' said Sir Sykes dryly.

'Ah, yes, but we have met, Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet,' returned Hold, with a twinkle of satisfaction in his bold black eyes; 'not that it's any wonder you do not remember so humble a chap as yours truly. I have the advantage of you.'

These last words were uttered with a malicious emphasis which caused Sir Sykes to look again and keenly in the man's face, while cudgelling his memory, though in vain, to find some guiding clue. He saw a hard, fierce, swarthy countenance, dark hair partly grizzled, and a powerfully built frame, such as matched well with the face. Had

Sir Sykes on the Bench been consulted by his brother magistrates as to the number of calendar months of imprisonment with hard labour to be allotted to such a one as Hold, he would have said at once: 'Give him the heaviest sentence warranted by law, for, unless Lavater's science be false, there could scarcely exist a more dangerous scoundrel.'

Sir Sykes, however, was not on the bench, nor Hold in the dock at quarter-sessions. So he merely replied with a steady look: 'No, Mr Hold, or whatever your name may be. To the best of my belief, I never in my life saw you.'

'Very good,' quietly returned the man, taking out a black pocket-book much frayed and battered, and rustling over the dog's-eared leaves. 'Let me see; yes, March the twenty-fourth is the first important date.'

'And may I ask,' interposed Sir Sykes, with somewhat of the cold haughtiness which had stood him in good stead in many a moral duel, 'what is the meaning of these perpetual references to a specified day in March?'

Hold's low inward laugh was one of sincere enjoyment. 'It's not only at cards, Sir Sykes,' he said with a chuckle, 'that the game of brag can be played. But come, it's of no use, Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet. My hand's too strong—chokeful of court-cards, kings, queens, knaves, and aces—to give you a chance. I have entries here'—slapping the black pocket-book—'for more days than one. Take one of 'em at random. You have cause to remember the ninth of April in the same year, Sir Sykes. So hark I! And with a nod and a wink, Hold slid back the book into an inner pocket of his rough coat.

The baronet's blanched face and anxious eye betrayed how deeply he was agitated by what he had heard.

'What do you want of me?' he asked abruptly, but in a tremulous voice.

'Hark ye, shipmate!' rejoined the other, leaning his head on his hand, while his elbow rested on the stained and chipped table beside him; 'all in good time. Business is business, and is not to be disposed of in that sort of hop, skip, and jump way. Take another look at me, if you like; and since you can't tell who I am, say *what* I am.'

'I should say,' answered Sir Sykes, gazing with undisguised repugnance at the outward man of his dubious acquaintance, 'that you have been a sailor.'

'No great wit wanted, I reckon,' retorted Hold roughly, 'to make out that much. The very mermaid on my arm here, and the crown and the anchor,' he continued, baring his brawny wrist so as to exhibit the blue tattoo marks which it bore, 'would tell you that. But I've followed more trades than one; tried them all in turn, sir. How does that idle string of words that schoolboys say, come off the tongue? Ay, I have it—Tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor. Why, I've been everything on the urchin's roll-call except thief; I never was quite that—or gentleman, which is a cut above me.'

'You have seen the world evidently,' said Sir Sykes in a bland tone; 'but you must remember, Mr Hold, that you have not as yet explained to me with sufficient clearness the nature of your business with me.'

'Labour lost, if I did,' rejoined Hold with a cynical smile. 'A secret is best of course when it belongs to one only. Two may get some good out of it; but once it's common property, the goose that laid the golden eggs is picked bare to the last bone. Do you see,' he added, dropping his voice, 'our good friends yonder, and do you suppose that such as they are not all ears, as it were, to snare up any odds and ends of our talk? He with the frying-pan is as knowing a hand as any in England—a bungling-letter writer, as the newspaper paragraphs call it. And the others, well! the others are all on the lay more or less, to scratch up a living by their wits. It's only the cream of the cadging profession that can afford to patronise the *Rest*. It's quite a genteel hotel of its class, I assure you. But now you know why I don't speak out. Better deal with me singly, than with all these blood-suckers, I should say. And so, as we understand each other, we need not enlighten others.'

'Is there no more private place?' the baronet began.

But Hold broke curtly in: 'None, Sir Sykes, in a crib like this. Up-stairs, we'd double the risk of being overheard. Walls have ears, you know. Now here, where we can see into the garden from this open window at my elbow, we're pretty safe.—Deputy!' (this was addressed to the sharp boy in the ragged jacket) 'two glasses of rum, d'ye hear!'

Sir Sykes had had time to think, and it was in a firm tone that he now spoke.

'Now, Mr Hold,' he said, 'I am a man of the world, and as such will not affect indignation or astonishment in the fact that you wish to bargain with me, for your own advantage, as to certain painful events of my earlier life. Name your terms, but be moderate. The law, as you are aware, is not very indulgent towards those who extort money by means of threats or calumnies.'

Hold's face, hitherto good-humoured, wore an ugly scowl. Drop that style of argument, if you're wise, baronet,' he said resolutely. 'Dick Hold is not often backward, when folks will fire shotted guns instead of harmless blank cartridge. Come, come, commodore; if you dared to indict me, you'd hardly be here. Try that game, if you choose. It only serves the turn of those who can come into court with clean hands. Yours mayhap would shew a stain or so.—Here is Deputy with the rum. Let us drink, sir, to our better acquaintance, and be friends.'

Sir Sykes, however, pushed back the glass which Hold proffered him. Sunk in his own estimation though he might be, he could not stoop to pledge a ruffian of the stamp of this one.

'Your very good health, Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet,' said Hold unconcernedly, as he tossed off his liquor. 'We wear well, both of us; though many a year has gone over our heads since that ninth of April that you know of.'

'Were you at Sandston, then, on that day?' asked the baronet, thrown off his guard, and a slight quivering of Hold's eyelid told that a point had been scored against his incautious opponent.

'Not so. At Tunbridge Wells rather,' returned Hold slowly. 'I remember seeing the funeral—of the poor little girl of yours who died, Sir Sykes.'

Sir Sykes grew almost as white as he had done

when first he began the reading of the letter which had drawn him to such a rendezvous.

'You will oblige me, sir,' he said in a voice that he vainly tried to render firm and calm, 'by being silent in future as to—as to—'

'So that we understand one another, I agree to anything,' was Hold's half-sullen rejoinder.

'And now to come to terms. You want money, no doubt?' said Sir Sykes more composedly.

'All people, to the best of my belief, want money,' replied Hold with a grin. 'I am no cormorant, no shearer and skinner of such as come under my handling. Just now, Sir Sykes, I will only ask you for five hundred—a flea-bit!'

The demand, considering the baronet's rank and means, was unexpectedly moderate. Sir Sykes in turn produced his pocket-book. 'Few men,' he said, 'keep such a sum in ready cash. But it so happens—laying down a roll of bank-notes upon the squallid table—that I have money, two hundred and thirty pounds, with me; and here'—penicilling a few words on a leaf which he tore out of the book—'is my written promise for two seventy. I will send you a cheque to-morrow.'

'Nothing,' observed Hold, 'could be more satisfactory. Don't send a groom; grooms chatter; the post is safer. You won't drink the rum, Sir Sykes? I will.' And he swallowed the alcohol at a gulp, and then swept notes and paper into his pocket. 'One thing more, Sir Sykes. I did not come here for hush-money and nothing else. I want you to take into your house and as a member of your family a person—of my recommending, Sir Sykes.'

'I fail to comprehend you, Mr Hold,' said the baronet stiffly.

The other laughed. 'Her name,' he said, 'is Ruth.'

'Ruth!' exclaimed Sir Sykes, starting from his seat, and speaking so ungardonally that the unwashed crew at the firelit end of the room turned to peer at him.

'Yes, Ruth. Don't you like the name?' asked the fellow calmly. 'My sister, Ruth Hold.'

'Ruth—your sister—yours—at Carbery?' gasped out the bewildered baronet.

'You need not be afraid,' was the rough reply: 'she won't disgrace your fine house or your dainty ways. I doubt if your misses at home are more thoroughly the lady than Ruth Hold—my—sister.'

'You must see, your own good sense must shew you,' stammered out Sir Sykes, looking the picture of abject terror, as the smoky glare of the lamp fell on his pale face, 'that even were I willing to consent to so extraordinary—' In short it cannot be.'

'Sorry for you, then!' returned Hold with a shrug; 'for on your acceptance of these terms alone is my silence to be bought. Come, come, shipmate! hear reason. Ruth shall bear any surname you like, and it can't be hard to account for her coming to Carbery. You knew her father—an old friend—military—died in India—left you her guardian, Ruth's guardian; eh, Sir Sykes?'

'I—I will take time to think of it,' said the baronet confusedly. 'You shall hear from me to-morrow. And now, I had better go.'

And he rose. Hold re-conducted him, civilly enough, as far as the outer door, and watched him depart through the howling wind and driving rain towards Carbery. But what neither Hold nor Sir

Sykes could have conjectured was that Jasper Denizil, hidden in a crazy arbour among the sun-flowers and pot-herbs of the inn garden, hard by the open window, had during the greater portion of the interview played the part of an unsuspected eavesdropper, and was now on his way by another route to Carbery Chase.

ANALOGIES OF ANIMAL AND PLANT LIFE.

THE boundary-line between the lowest forms of animal and vegetable life is of a most indefinite character. Nature would seem to have been guilty of many inconsistencies in her arrangement of these organisms; for a being which at one period of its existence exhibits the common characteristics of a plant, may at another period possess the attributes of an animal. Such an organism is found in the form of a fungus which grows on the surface of tan-pits. Under slightly altered conditions it becomes a locomotive creature capable of feeding upon solid matter. Naturalists have therefore always felt a difficulty in deciding which of these doubtful organisms should be classed with the one kingdom and which with the other. Indeed it has been seriously proposed to form a separate class for their reception, a kind of 'no-man's land' to which they might by general consent be relegated.

It would at first appear that a sufficient distinction would be made if such organisms as possess the power of spontaneous movement were at once called animals. But this classification would prove to be most erroneous, for many plants possess the power of movement in a very high degree. The swarm-spores of such algae as seaweeds, for instance, swim actively about by means of minute filaments or *cilia*. They were on this account long supposed to be animalcules, and it was not until they were found to ultimately develop into the plants from which they sprung, that their real place in nature was determined. These swarm-spores, common enough in the sea and in pools and ditches all the world over, are particles of matter which detach themselves from their parent cells, and after a longer or shorter time of activity, come to rest and form new algae. They are provided with two or more vibratile *cilia*—minute processes which we more fully alluded to in a recent paper on 'Bell Animalcules.'

The suggestion that animals should be distinguished by their motor powers is also fallacious, for the reason that many animals do not possess this power. Sponges, for instance, are organised bodies which remain stationary attached to rocks. But their system of pores and vents, through which a constant circulation is maintained, and by means of which they are supplied with particles of solid matter as food, most certainly entitle them to be ranked as animals.

The similarity between the lowest organisms of the two kingdoms does not seem so extraordinary after all, when by the help of the microscope we examine their structural details. In both we find a similar semi-fluid matter called protoplasm, which has been defined as 'the physical basis of life.' In the cellular tissues of many plants this fluid may, with a sufficiently high magnifying power, be seen in a state of ceaseless activity. It is composed of four elements, namely carbon,

hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen. An analogous substance is found in white of egg, and protoplasm itself is one of the constituents of blood. Many of our readers will know that the colour of blood is due to innumerable red bodies called corpuscles, so minute, that myriads will be contained in one drop of the vital fluid. But there are also other corpuscles quite devoid of colour. These are minute particles of protoplasm, and like the same matter in plants, they exhibit peculiar phenomena of motion, allied to those seen in the *Amaba* or 'Proteus-animalcule.' We may therefore conclude that the vital principle in both animals and plants is the same, and that the tissues of both are built up of this protoplasm; the point of difference being that, whereas animals obtain it ready-made from plants, the latter are the manufacturers of it from mineral or inorganic sources.

There are of course, besides the mere chemical constituents of protoplasm, other conditions necessary to vitality. A certain range of temperature would seem to be the most important, if we except perhaps the presence of water, without which life can hardly exist. But even here a curious exception is presented to us in the Rotifer or wheel-animalcules—formerly alluded to in this *Journal* in an article on 'Suspended Animation'—which may be kept in a state of dried dust for many years, and which, on the addition of a drop of water, will resume their original vigour and rapid movement. The so-called mummy-wheat which is said to germinate after a burial of some thousands of years, is an instance of this retention of the life-principle in plants. Light as well as heat also plays an important part in the mystery of vitality, although it is a curious but well-authenticated fact that the mere growth of plants is most rapid in darkness. We may see an instance of this in the stems of a growing plant which is placed near a window. They will all be bent towards the glass. Hence it is a common saying that they are attracted by the light. But the real reason for this bent form is, that their darker side grows more rapidly than the rest of the plant, forcing it to assume a curved form.

It is in the nature of their food that plants and animals shew the most marked points of difference. We may state as a broad rule that all living things have the power of taking in foreign matter, wherewith to supply and replenish their various parts. This process, in which the many units which make up the structure are constantly dying away and being reproduced, constitutes what we call growth. In carrying out this function, animals convert organic into inorganic matter, whilst plants do precisely the reverse. They may both be described as digesting their food—if we accept as a definition of the term digestion, that process by which insoluble food is reduced to a soluble form fitted for absorption. In the animal this process is performed by means of glands or their analogues in lower animals, which open upon the internal surface of the stomach, and which secrete an acid fluid called the gastric juice. This fluid contains pepsine—a dried preparation of which, obtained from the stomach of the pig, forms a valuable remedy in the treatment of indigestion. Its power of dissolving organic matter is so subtle, that even after death it may act upon the stomach

itself, as well as upon any of the other organs with which it may come in contact. The problem as to why the stomach is during life preserved from destruction by its own secretion, was long a puzzle to physiologists; but it has been decided according to one opinion, that the alkalinity of the blood, which constantly circulates through the tissues, protects them from injury by its neutralising influence.

In plants the function of digestion is the same in principle, although the absence of a mouth and special digestive organs renders it different in detail. Plants require inorganic matters for support. Potatoes and turnips will, for instance, withdraw immense quantities of alkaline matter from the soil. Beans and peas will rob the ground in like manner of its lime, while the various kinds of grasses will choose silica for their nourishment. It is this selective property of plants which renders necessary the rotation of crops. A succession of alkaline plants would in time render the ground quite unproductive of vegetation of that kind; but if a proper rotation of crops be observed—the soil, whilst giving up one of its constituents, is gradually regaining those which it has previously lost. A consideration of these conditions of agriculture forms the very groundwork of scientific farming.

Exceptions to the rule that plants consume inorganic matter are furnished by certain fungi and also by the insectivorous plants. One of these latter, the *Dionaea muscipula*, or Venus's flytrap, we fully described some months ago; but the subject is so replete with interest that we shall not hesitate to recur to it and to refer to some of the other members of the same family.

Without reproducing our description of the *Dionaea*, we may assist our readers' memory by shortly stating that the leaf of the plant is formed of two lobes joined by a midrib, and that each half of the leaf is furnished with three sensitive hairs. On a fly or other insect settling on the leaf and so irritating these hairs, the two lobes gradually close and imprison the intruder. The most remarkable property of the plant is that it not only kills insects in this way, but that it actually digests them in a manner exceedingly similar to that by which animals are nourished; for after the prey is secured, a liquid secreted in the upper part of the leaf is exuded, and this liquid is analogous with that furnished in the case of animals by the glands of the digestive mucous membrane. The closeness of the analogy will be better understood by referring to an experiment which was made with a view to testing the solvent powers of this secretion. A slice chipped from a dog's tooth was placed between the lobes of a *Dionaea* leaf. After some days the lobes were separated, and the piece of tooth was found to be in such a soft fibrous condition that it was torn to shreds by the slight force employed in removing it. This energetic power of the secretion will remind the reader of what we have already said regarding the action of the gastric juice upon the animal tissues after death. Another curious point of similarity between the two fluids is observed in the fact that in both cases the secretion is stimulated by the presence of food.

It seems almost incredible to think how such a peculiarity in a plant should have, until very recent years, remained in obscurity. It is true

that more than a century ago an English naturalist described it, and submitted his observations to Linnaeus. But since that time the matter had aroused very little interest, until some few years ago when Darwin published his wonderful book on Insectivorous Plants. This want of attention is evidently due to the fact that Linnaeus himself merely looked upon the plant as one, like the sensitive plant, having an excitable structure. He regarded the imprisoned insects as merely an accidental occurrence, stating it as his opinion that they were probably released when the leaf reopened. The matter was thus quietly set at rest by a great authority, and no more was heard of the *Dionaea* until an able naturalist of North Carolina, where the plant is indigenous, again called attention to it.

Another plant belonging to this group has several peculiarities which are worthy of notice. We allude to the *Sarracenia*, which is found in the eastern states of North America. This plant grows in bogs and similar moist neighbourhoods. The leaf consists of a trumpet-shaped tube half covered with an arched lid. This tube exhibits a smooth and slippery surface for some distance down its interior; but lower still it is studded with bristles, its lowest depths being filled with a fluid of intoxicating properties. Round the mouth of the pitcher thus formed exude drops of a sweet viscid fluid. The *Nepenthes* form another branch of the family of Pitcher-plants, including many different species. Indigenous to the Asiatic Archipelago, their appearance is that of a half-strippy climbing plant, the leaf of which terminates in a long stem, to which is attached a hanging pitcher. These pitchers vary in length from an inch to a foot, or even more; indeed some are large enough to entrap a bird or small quadruped. Their structure is not so complicated as those of the *Sarracenia*, although in other respects they greatly resemble them; while in both cases the digestive functions are closely allied with those of the *Dionaea*. But the most seductive of all these traps for unwary insects is certainly the *Darlingtonia*. Its victim is first of all attracted by the bright colour of its petals, and after it has settled upon the plant, and helped to fertilise it by the movement of its body against the pollen, it slips into a treacherous pitcher, to be first intoxicated, and then totally annihilated. Surely there will be no difficulty in finding an analogy here to certain social institutions belonging to the higher order of animals!

The electrical phenomena common to both plants and animals must next claim our attention. The celebrated Galvani was the first to direct attention to the existence of an electrical current in the muscle of a frog's leg. Volta disputed this, and insisted that the current produced by Galvani was due to certain metallic connections which he employed, and not to any inherent electricity in the muscle itself. Since Galvani's time, however, numerous investigators have followed up his researches; and it is now an accepted fact that every exertion of muscular force is accompanied by a current analogous to electricity, the strength of which is in exact proportion to the mechanical power called into play. It is a curious fact that this peculiar force remains in the muscle for a certain time after death, but it is totally lost so soon as rigidity sets in, and no earthly power can recall it. It

may therefore be considered as essentially a vital phenomenon. It is moreover greater in mammals than in birds, and is least noticeable in reptiles and fishes. But we must not omit to mention that among the latter are found several which have a powerful electric battery as their chief defensive power. The Mediterranean torpedo—one of the Ray or Skate family of fishes—after which our most modern engines of war are named, is the chief of these.

Although it has long been known that currents of electricity existed in plants, such currents were attributed to chemical reaction between the external moisture and the internal juices of the plants themselves, and also to atmospheric disturbance. They have therefore hitherto borne very little analogy to the muscular electricity of animals. But very recently the subject has received great attention; in fact the electrical disturbance consequent on the excitation of the leaf of our old acquaintance the *Dionaea*, formed part of the subject of a paper lately read before the Royal Society. The authors of this contribution to our knowledge of a very obscure subject, proved by numerous delicate experiments that the current which accompanied the closure of the leaf in question was in every respect similar to that obtained from the muscles of animals.

THE BELL-RINGER.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IV.—THE ANTHEM OF THE BELLS.

It was a solemn gathering when two hours later, the physician entered Bertram's room in company with Squire Peregrine, Colonel Lindsay, and Gertrude. The change in the Squire was marvellous; his sternness had left him; he followed his daughter and his old friend; he hung upon every word which fell from the lips of the man of science; and during the time when the doctors were alone with their patient and Nathan, he paced his room in a state nearly bordering on mental distraction. Meeting the doctors as they at length emerged from the sick-room, he grasped them by the arm. 'Will he live? will he live?' he reiterated wildly. 'Tell me the truth. My son, my son!'

In vain they urged him to be calm; his reasoning powers seemed to have deserted him.

'He must not die; he shall not die!' he repeated; until Colonel Lindsay, laying his hand upon his shoulder, whispered: 'There is hope. Do not despair. My old friend, remember how much yet remains to be done for him. The active cause of mischief is at last removed.' He produced a small piece of the blade of a knife, at the sight of which the Squire shuddered. 'Humanly speaking, you owe his life twice over to Nathan Boltz. As to the perpetrator of the outrage, he will be dealt with according to his deserts; at present, we have no clue to his whereabouts.'

This speech of the Colonel's was intended to answer two purposes—to give the Squire time to recover himself, and to arrest any remarks which might fall from the medical men, who were to remain all night at the Hall. It had the desired

effect; they saw that private family affairs were connected with this murderous attack and remained silent, only insisting that Nathan (whom Bertram had faintly recognised) should remain with him. The Squire sent for him, and in the presence of all his family, grasped him by the hand and begged him to stay. How he overcame all his scruples, how he placed himself in the position of a debtor, was made plain to all who heard him; and Gertrude felt her heart throb almost to pain as she sat by listening to the words of her father, the proudest of the Peregrine race.

Therefore it was that Nathan took his place in the sick-room, surrounded by every luxury which appertains to wealth. It was a strange position; but he entered upon it with his usual large-hearted earnestness, believing he was fulfilling his promise to the mother of the sick man.

In the meantime, Patricia was undergoing a torment of fear and suspense. A week had elapsed, Oliver had not returned, and no inquiry had as yet been made concerning him. She dared not question any one, and though many an eye was bent upon her in a half-pitying manner, she would not for worlds betray her wretchedness. She asked not to be confirmed in her miserable doubts and horrible fears, for she felt certain her lover was somehow concerned in her brother's illness. Yet why this change in her father? She could not understand; and pondering day by day, became pale and ill, restless and depressed.

Christmas-day came and went much in the same way as other days. There were no decorations in the church, and no sound of the sweet loud bells of Linden Tower, for Bertram lay hovering between life and death, and all bell-ringing was suspended on his account. Another week passed on; wearily dragged the hours; when at the close of a dark day of rain and wind, a messenger arrived with a note for Patricia, which caused her heart to throb and her pulse to rebound with agonising pain. The writer of the dirty ill-spelt letter begged her to go at once to a farm-house ten miles distant, where Oliver Peregrine lay dying. Now Patricia knew she must put away her mask for ever. With eager haste she ran with the summons to her father, and the utter wretchedness in her face made him full of pity for her.

'Jenkyns shall bring the carriage for you, my darling, immediately. I know the spot; close to the stone quarries—a dangerous place. Be brave, Patricia. But you must not go alone; Colonel Lindsay will accompany you.'

She made no reply; her white lips moved, but no sound came forth. After a vain attempt to speak, she left the room, and shortly after was handed by Colonel Lindsay into the carriage. Their drive was accomplished in silence. Patricia's agonising suspense was too great for speech; and her gallant companion felt too much to attempt commonplaces.

When they arrived at the farm, Patricia descended from the carriage, and entered the house alone. In an inner room a woman was busy making a clearance of such articles as she could stuff away in corners and behind chairs, while a faint moaning told that the unhappy man occupied the apartment.

'I found the gentleman lying at the bottom of a quarry,' said the man who lived on the farm. 'It's a fortnight back, sir, that going round the

place as late as ten o'clock, I heard as it were close to me some one groaning as if in dreadful pain. It was some time before I could find out where the noise came from. At last my wife and me together got down to the bottom of the quarry, and managed between us to drag him to the top. He was wonderful bad, but refused to tell his name or let a doctor be fetched, and only let my boy run with the note because he felt he was dying. We have done what we could, sir; but you see we don't know many folks about here, or we might have helped him more.'

Patricia listened intently as the man gave these particulars, and made her way alone to the side of her cousin. He lay upon a bed placed hastily on the floor, his face worn to a shadow with intense suffering of mind and body. As Patricia gazed upon the helpless sufferer, all her love for the man burst forth; she knelt down, covered her face with her hands, and wept piteously.

The woman who stood by, with true woman's instinct, guessed the nature of her sorrow, and said gently: 'You see, miss, the gentleman would not say who he were, or we should ha' sent before. I have done what I could; but I fear he's very, very bad.' She wanted to break the truth as gently as she could, for her experienced eye had noted every change.

'I am dying,' said Oliver in a low voice. 'This nearly over, Patricia; but the pain has almost left me; and if I have strength, I must tell you a very painful story for I need your forgiveness, as you will find. Do not grieve for me, Patricia. He paused. 'Are you alone?'

Patricia shook her head.

'Who is with you?'

'Colonel Lindsay.'

'Tell him to come here.'

At this crisis, whomever were heard outside, and Colonel Lindsay returned with Patricia, bringing with them Mr Downes, the surgeon.

'Mr Downes is here,' said the Colonel, 'through a message which I sent him previous to leaving home; he will probably think it advisable to remain with us for a time.'

Then Patricia knew that the surgeon was there not only in his medical capacity, but as a witness to whatever might fall from the lips of her lover; and yet her dread of any unpleasant revelation was intensified by her great love for the man whose humiliation and shame she would fain have spared. Mr Downes having carefully examined the patient, administered a restorative, and Oliver related with pain and difficulty the following story.

'You know that Bertram and I were in college at the same time, where my naturally extravagant habits led us both into debt. When we left college, my uncle, believing me all that I ought to be, begged me to remain at the Hall as companion to his son; at the same time he proposed that I should qualify myself for the Church, and behaved to me with the kindness of a father. I managed to fix the burden of our debts upon Bertram, whose easy disposition and generous nature led him to trust me thoroughly. During a London season we again became steeped in difficulties beyond our power to remove. Returning to the Hall, I fancied myself fascinated by the beauty of Ruth Boltz. How I overcame her scruples, and finally induced her to fly to London

with me, I have no strength to tell; nor how I beguiled her to remain there, leading her to hope for marriage. I had come to town for more purposes than one. While at the Hall, our creditors had become clamorous; and Bertram, in despair of obtaining any help from his father, and not daring to tell of his entanglements, took counsel with me as to what was to be done. By degrees I opened up my plan, filled in a cheque, and forced Bertram by threats of exposure to forge his father's name. This done, I took care that he himself should present it at the banker's. My uncle who was unusually precise and correct in all business matters, at once discovered the fraud. It was easy to cast the blame on Bertram, whom I had persuaded to remain in London; and the fact of his absence sealed his guilt. Ruth's flight was at once connected with his; and enraged beyond expression, his father forbade him the house, tore up his letters unopened, and refused ever to acknowledge him again. In vain Bertram appealed to me to speak for him; I only traduced him the more while appearing to shield him; and persuaded him to go abroad while he had the means of doing so. Seven months later, poor Ruth came home and applied to me in her distress. Again I promised her marriage, and from time to time made her an allowance. She promised to keep my secret; yet her presence in the village was a continual annoyance to me, for I feared that some time, in her despair, she might reveal the truth. But I could not prevail upon her to leave the neighbourhood, and I waited year after year before I could mature my plans to secure the position which I had always coveted. At last she died, worn out with trouble, and would no doubt have spoken out at last. But sending for my aunt, the latter arrived too late. Poor suffering Ruth was dead! . . .

Here the sufferer paused in mental agony, and after partaking of stimulant, resumed his dread confession. 'Then I was elated with my false freedom. My uncle had long since erased Bertram's name from his will, and named me as his heir. I soon proposed to my cousin Patricia, and we were on the point of marrying, when my aunt's death postponed it. In the midst of all my prosperity, I had a vague terror of Nathan Boltz, believing that he knew my secret, and I hated him for his supposed knowledge of it. Once more my marriage was about to take place, and again Hilda's death interposed, and saved Patricia from a life of shame. Bertram returned; and deceived by his sister, Nathan believed that in him he saw her betrayer. Then the grand principle of his life was worked out—forgiveness. The return of Colonel Lindsay helped on my ruin. I made a desperate effort to retain the prize which I felt slipping from my grasp. After that dreadful scene in the church, I fled in frantic haste across the country, eager to escape from myself. But the hand of God was upon me; I could not elude that; and believing that I had been a murderer, I looked upon myself as paying the penalty of my sin, for I knew from the first that I must die. I have no more to add, only to express my grief and my repentance, and to pray that God may pardon my fearful sin.'

He stopped, greatly exhausted; and Mr Downes again did what he could for his relief. All through the night, Patricia sat holding his hand in hers, assuring him of their forgiveness, and ministering to his wants; and Oliver Peregrine

blessed her with the solemnity of a dying man. At daybreak it was all over. Patricia's watching had been a short one; but she knew that henceforth she would walk through life alone.

Oliver Peregrine was buried in Linden church-yard; and Nathan, at the Squire's urgent request, witnessed the last rites, and stood uncovered while the earth was filled into the grave of the man who had so wronged him. Never again, however, would he prepare the narrow resting-place in which dust mingles with its kindred dust, or stand in the belfry tower as master of the bells. Nathan had parted from the old life, which would know him no more. After Bertram's recovery, he travelled with him for two years, and learned to know him as a brother. On their return, the village people could scarcely recognise the quondam bell-ringer in the accomplished gentleman and travelled man of the world. The soil had been ready to receive the seed; but while the intellect was enlarged the heart of the man remained the same. Thus it came about that on a certain happy day, Nathan, who was the affianced husband of Gertrude, stood once more in the belfry tower; and with her by his side, and the ringers clustered round, while Bertram and Colonel Lindsay looked on from the doorway, he begged that he might try his hand again. A proud consent was given, and prouder than ever were the ringers, of him who had been their chief. After a slight pause, Nathan's hand, now white and shapely, grasped the rope once more. 'Now lads!' he cried—'now!' and the bells chimed out a right merry peal.

UNDER FIRE.

Most men who have been under fire will frankly confess that the sensation is anything but a pleasant one. But inspired by a sense of duty and a lively enthusiasm, the anxious feeling soon passes off. The skirmishers load and fire, the gunners work their guns without much thought of their own danger. Indeed it is well if this indifference does not go too far, for then reckless excitement and careless haste take the place of soldierly deliberation and prudence.

At Waterloo the fighting between two armies armed with old weapons of short range was all at what we now call close-quarters. The most effective range for artillery was about five hundred yards, and musketry-fire was exchanged at less than half that distance. Rifled weapons of long range have changed all this, and the introduction of breech-loading small-arms has worked a perfect revolution on the battle-field. In 1866 the Prussian needle-gun shewed in the fighting in Bohemia the terrible effects that can be produced by rapid rifle-fire. Every army in Europe was soon provided with breech-loading rifles; and in the war of 1870, for the first time two great armies thus formidably armed met in battle. In the first conflicts of the war the Prussians attacked in close order, as they had done in 1866; but in the great battle of Gravelotte, fought on August 18, 1870, they learned a lesson which made them completely change their tactics; and every European army (but

one) has followed their example. The lesson was dearly bought. On that day the French army, one hundred and twenty thousand strong, lay along the hills to the west of Metz, where it was attacked by two hundred thousand Germans. The village of St Privat, on holding which the security of the whole French position depended, was held by Marshal Canrobert's corps. The village is surrounded by long gentle slopes; and in fighting it is always found that it is more difficult to storm such a place than one that stands upon a steep hill. The very steepness of the ascent in some degree protects the attacking party as they ascend, by making the fire of the defenders more vertical; whereas on a gentle slope each bullet has a longer course and more chances of doing harm. As a preparation for the attack on St Privat, and in order in some degree to destroy the steadiness of the defenders, the place was bombarded for some time with one hundred and twenty guns; then when it was hoped that the artillery-fire had cleared the way, three brigades of the Guards, the picked men of the German army, were ordered to carry the village.

Massed in close order, with a front of two thousand paces, and covered by clouds of skirmishers, the Guards began their advance up the slopes. In ten minutes the attack was over, and had utterly failed. Brief as it was, it was a terrible time. The German official Report does not deal in exaggerated language, and it speaks of the 'storm of bullets that came beating down from St Privat' and forced the Guardsmen to crowd together in every hollow and behind every wave of the ground. The French used their chassepots to deadly purpose; in those ten minutes six thousand of the Prussian Guard had fallen. But the rapid fire of the French had all but emptied their cartridge-boxes, and the defective arrangements made by the staff had not provided properly for supplying the deficiency. This is always a danger to which men armed with the breech-loader are liable, and it is an awkward one, for in modern war the man who is without cartridges is virtually disarmed. The cartridges of the dead and wounded were collected and distributed; but this was a poor resource. The enemy had formed new columns of attack, composed of Saxon and Prussian troops, and these, though not without heavy loss, carried the village, and decided the battle which shut Marshal Bazaine and his great army up in Metz. The day after Gravelotte was fought and won, the German headquarters staff published an order that an attack in heavy masses like that which had won Sadowa but had failed at St Privat should never be attempted again.

The deadliness of breech-loading fire has produced another effect upon tactics in battle. The spade has taken a place second only to the rifle, and no General occupies a position in battle even for a couple of hours without rapidly strengthening it with light intrenchments. These consist generally of a shallow trench, the earth from

which is thrown up towards the enemy, so as to form a little parapet in front of it. This is the shelter-trench which we hear of so often in war correspondence. Effective shelter-trenches can be constructed in from eighteen minutes to half an hour, according to the nature of the ground and the skill of the men engaged in the work; and they have this advantage, that they can be continually improved, the trench being deepened, the parapet raised, and a ditch formed outside it, if the position is occupied long enough; so that what was at first a mere shelter-trench, gradually becomes a formidable line of earthworks. A trench is a very efficient protection against artillery-fire, for unless the shells drop actually into it, or upon the parapet, the fragments are not likely to hurt the men crouching or lying down in it; and such accurate hits are rare, most of the projectiles falling a little behind or a little short of the line aimed at.

It is a fact that the actual number of men put *hors de combat* by artillery-fire is very few in any case. It really is meant to produce an effect on the *morale* of the troops attacked; that is to say, to make them nervous, excited, liable to panic, and apt to give way before a sudden onset. Hundreds of shells exploding on the ground and in the air, and scattering showers of fragments on all sides, dropping nearly over walls and barricades, crashing through walls and roofs, and searching woods and thickets, are apt to gradually break down the nerve of all but the steadiest men.

As a matter of actually killing and maiming a large number of the enemy, it is coming to be believed that the old artillery of Napoleon's days used at close quarters, that is at about four hundred yards, against heavy masses, was more deadly than the modern rifled gun. Artillery is now effective up to two thousand five hundred yards, and sometimes even beyond that range. Rifle-fire generally begins at four hundred yards, though picked marksmen may be engaged at longer ranges. The ordinary fighting range of the rifle is thus now equal to that of the field-gun of thirty years ago, and the accuracy of the fire is increased in even a greater ratio. With the old musket the chances of a bullet finding a human billet were extremely uncertain. At one hundred yards there was a deviation of two feet to right or left, which at two hundred yards had increased to more than six feet. The average deviation of the Martini-Henry is about seven inches at three hundred yards, a little less than a foot at five hundred, and about twenty inches at eight hundred; or less than the error of the old musket at one hundred yards. Without aiming, a rapidity of fire equal to twenty-five shots per minute has been obtained with the Martini-Henry with which our army is now furnished. How different from the weapons used in the Peninsula and at Waterloo.

Yet it is singular that the proportion which the loss in battle bears to the number of men engaged is on the whole decreasing, notwithstanding (or perhaps in consequence of) improved armaments. At Marengo in 1800 the loss in killed and wounded amounted to one-sixth of the effective force engaged; at Austerlitz (1805) it was one-seventh; at Preuss-Eylau (1807), as much as one-third; at

Wagram (1809), rather more than one-ninth; at Borodino (1812), one-fourth; and at Waterloo (1815), rather more than one-sixth. Coming now to more recent battles, we find that at Solferino (1859) the loss was only one-fourteenth; at Sadowa (1866), one-eleventh; at Gravelotte (1870), one-ninth; at Sedan, only one-seventeenth. It would seem that the diminution of the loss is the result of the open order, the use of cover, and the briefness of the struggle at the decisive points, where, on account of the severity of the fighting, it cannot last very long. Men will stand longer under a fire that knocks over only one man in a minute, than they will under one that kills a score in the same time. The heavy fighting at Plevna before its fall, was an exception to this diminution of loss, for in one of their attacks the Russians lost as much as one-fifth, but this was the result of their fighting in heavy columns, in defiance of the experience of 1870. Statistics from both the Russian and the German armies show that at all times the officers in proportion to their numbers lose more than the men. Naturally they are liable to attract attention and to be picked off by the enemy's marksmen.

With the immense armies of our day the total loss of men is enormous. At Sadowa the Prussians lost 10,000 men out of 215,000 engaged; the Austrians and Saxons 20,000 out of 220,000. At Gravelotte the French, 120,000 strong, lost 14,000; the Germans 20,000 out of 200,000. At Sedan the losses of the Germans were 10,000; of the French, 14,000. The heaviness of the German loss at the battle of Gravelotte was as we have already said, largely due to the failure of the Guards at St Privat.

From these statistics of loss in battle it may be imagined what a painful task and what severe labour are thrown upon the army which remains in possession of a battle-field at the end of the fight. The length of the lines in a general engagement like Sadowa is enormous, ranging from ten to fifteen miles; and the depth of the tract over which the fighting rolls perhaps from two or three to five or six miles; so that the 'battle-field' is a tract of country from thirty to eighty square miles in extent, and this immense tract is strewn with thirty or forty thousand killed and wounded. Here they lie scattered, so that it is a long walk from one fallen man to another; but over there on that hill-side, or in that village where the fight was close and hot, they are thrown together in little heaps, and there is no need of searching for them. Wherever there is water, wounded men are sure to be found, who have dragged themselves down to it. Perhaps they are dead at the brink. There is little blood to be seen; the rivers of blood shed on the battle-field exist only in poetry. Of the actual blood in a pool here and there on the field, most has come from cavalry or artillery horses killed by shell-fire.

The victors in the fight have thrown on their hands not only their own wounded, but those of the enemy. The hurried telegram which announces their success gives also in round numbers a rough estimate of the loss on both sides; generally it is an unintentional exaggeration, for it is hard to judge correctly. In two or three days the real numbers are known; for the dead have been collected, counted, and buried, with great mounds of earth that will mark the battle-field for centuries, and shew too where

the fight was hottest. The wounded, much more numerous than the dead, have been collected in the field-hospitals, and as many as possible are being sent off by train to the great hospitals of distant cities, in order to relieve the strain upon the resources of the medical staff and the volunteer aid societies working in the field. Hard work it is to deal with the immense mass of suffering men. Think what it is to have to arrange suddenly for even two cases of severe illness in an ordinary household, and then try to imagine what labour, care, and forethought are required to provide for many thousands of wounded men in the open country.

The care for the wounded begins while the fight is actually in progress. No help is so efficient as that which comes at once. A man is hit. If the wound is slight, he perhaps does not know anything about it till the fight is over, when he perceives that there is something wrong with his leg or his side; or if he does perceive it, he is able to bandage it at once with a handkerchief, or the bandage that now is carried by almost every soldier. The surgeon of the battalion gives him his assistance if he is at hand; but most men have to do without him if the work is hot, for he cannot multiply himself or be everywhere, though he does his best to accomplish something like it. In most armies, if the men are attacking, he can only attend to the slightly hurt, who are able to keep up with the rest. It is only when the battalion is halted or on the defensive that he can attend to the more seriously injured who fall, for they must not be left behind. The first help is always the most important; given at once to a slightly wounded man, it saves him from having to go into hospital and keeps him in the ranks; given to a fallen man, it probably saves his life. The great danger is exhaustion from loss of blood or from the nervous shock that follows a bullet-wound, which makes a man seem as if he were dying, though with a little help it soon passes off. To stop the bleeding with a tourniquet or a bandage, to give a drink of water or a little brandy, is the aid needed at the outset. This is done actually under fire.

The next help is provided by the field ambulances, or as they are very appropriately called in our service, 'dressing-stations'; these are established in shelter-places upon the actual battlefield in rear of the fighting line. Sometimes an inn, a farmhouse, or some barn is available for this purpose; if not, there are hospital tents or the shade of trees. Here is to be found a staff of surgeons and dressers, with appliances for the more necessary operations, and a store of stimulants and sustaining food. To bring the wounded men out of the firing, there are attached to each regiment a few trained bearers with stretchers. These bearers being provided, no man is allowed to leave the ranks to help the wounded; otherwise, every man that fell would be the means of withdrawing two others from the fight, and whole companies might melt rapidly away. The bearers remove as many as they can to the dressing-stations; they take those nearest to hand, and the wounded man who attracts their attention is lucky. Many more less fortunate than he have to wait till the battle is over, for comparatively few can be carried off during the actual fighting. Some, though too disabled to remain in the fight, can themselves

make their way to the stations. They ask their way of any bearers they meet; or if they meet none, they look out anxiously for the white flag with the red cross that flies over the little harbour of refuge of which they are in search. The wounded men who are thus brought or come into the stations have their wounds dressed by the surgeons, with the help of chloroform if necessary; a record of the nature of the wound and of the treatment so far, is rapidly written on a card; and if the man will bear removal, his stretcher is placed in an ambulance-wagon, and an easy journey of three or four miles places him in the field-hospital, established in tents or buildings well out of even long-range artillery-fire.

These field-hospitals, rapidly organised with *matériel* that is conveyed with every well-organised army, can accommodate several hundreds of men; and while the battle proceeds, fresh field-hospitals are being got ready wherever buildings or tents are available, for the night will bring in a host of patients. At first there are few men in them; most of the wounded that have been treated are still at the field ambulances. In the evening they arrive more rapidly; next day they come in crowds, and the hospitals are encumbered with them. And now the railway system of the country comes to the help of the overburdened medical staff. Hospital trains—that is to say trains fitted with hanging-beds or stretchers, and provided with nurses and surgeons—carry back to the hospitals of great cities in the rear, all those of the wounded who can safely bear the journey. Gradually death, recovery, or removal clears the field-hospitals; one by one they are closed, their *matériel* and appliances are packed in the wagons of the hospital service, and with their staff of surgeons, dressers, and nurses, they follow the armies in the field. Meanwhile the hospital trains have distributed the wounded into the permanent hospitals at home or into special ones provided for the war. If the army is an English one, ships comfortably fitted up as hospitals have received the wounded at the nearest coast to the battle-field, and they are lying in comfortable hammocks, between airy decks, perhaps at anchor in some roadstead, or better still, going rapidly under sail and steam towards home.

We can dwell with satisfaction on this work of mercy, in which so many willing hands engage to repair, as far as can be done, the wreck and ruin of war. It is a work of mercy which ought to bind nations together, for men of many lands meet to labour under the red cross of mercy wherever war devastates Europe. For many, alas! the help comes too late; the bullet has done its work swiftly and surely; life is gone; or the wound is mortal and the sufferer dies, and will lie under the long green battle-mound. An officer will look at the tablet under his uniform that gives the name and corps of the fallen man, and make an entry in his list of dead; and the news is sent to his friends far away at home. These are the messages that give more pain even than the bullet or bayonet, and terrible it is to think that when men meet in battle the rapid fire of the rifle is doing its work not only in the field, but far away in distant cities and villages, where the sound of the fighting cannot be heard; and where there are women and children and old men to whom that fight will bring sorrow and pain and

even death, as surely as if the rapid rifle-fire itself had swept them down. This is perhaps the darkest side of the picture, the portion of the loss caused by war, which our statistics cannot touch.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

FROM THE PENSION OF ALEXANDRE DUMAS, 'LE MAÎTRE D'ARMES.'

THE death of the famous dog Sutherland—thus named after the Englishman who had made a gift of it to the Empress Catharine II. of Russia—nearly caused a tragic mistake, in so far as it nearly cost the donor, a celebrated banker, his life. The occurrence took place at St Petersburg.

One morning, at daybreak, Mr Sutherland, the gentleman who had presented the dog to the Empress, and who was consequently a favourite with that august personage—was suddenly awoken by his man-servant.

'Sir,' said the footman, 'your house is surrounded with guards, and the master of the police demands to speak to you.'

'What does he wish with me?' exclaimed the banker, as he leaped from his bed, somewhat startled by this announcement.

'I know not, sir,' answered the footman; 'but it appears that it is a matter of the highest importance, and which, from what he says, can only be communicated to you personally.'

'Shew him in,' said Mr Sutherland, as he hastily donned his dressing-gown.

The footman departed, and returned some minutes afterwards with His Excellency Mr Rellow, upon whose face the banker read at the first glance some formidable intelligence. The worthy banker, however, maintained his calmness, and—welcoming the master of the police with his usual urbanity, presented him with a seat. His Excellency, however, remained standing, and in a tone the most dolorous which it was possible to assume, said:

'Mr Sutherland, believe me when I assure you that I am truly grieved to have been chosen by Her Majesty, my very gracious sovereign, to accomplish an order, the severity of which afflicts me, but which has without doubt been provoked by some great crime.'

'By some great crime, Your Excellency!' exclaimed the banker. 'And who then has committed this crime?'

'You, doubtless, sir, since it is upon you that the punishment is to fall.'

'Sir, I swear to you that I know not of any reproach with which to charge myself as a subject of our sovereign; for I am a naturalised Russian, as you must know.'

'And it is precisely, sir, because you are a naturalised Russian that your position is terrible. If you had remained a subject of His Britannic Majesty, you would have been able to call in the aid of the English consul, and escape thus perhaps the rigour of the order which I am, to my very great regret, charged to execute.'

'Tell me then, Your Excellency, what this order is?'

'Oh, sir, never will I have the strength to make it known to you.'

'Have I lost the good graces of Her Majesty?'

'Oh, if it were only that!'

'Is it a question to make me depart for England?'

'Oh! no; even that must not be.'

'Mon Dieu! you terrify me. Is it an order to send me to Siberia?'

'Siberia, sir, is a fine country, and which people have calumniated. Besides, people return from it.'

'Am I condemned to prison?'

'The prison is nothing. Prisoners come out of prison.'

'Sir, sir!' cried the banker, more and more affrighted, 'am I destined to the knout?'

'The knout is a punishment very grievous; but the knout does not kill.'

'Miserable fate!' said Sutherland, terrified. 'I see indeed that it is a matter of death.'

'And what a death!' exclaimed the master of the police, whilst he solemnly raised his eyes with an expression of the most profound pity.

'How! what a death! Is it not enough to kill me without trial, to assassinate me without cause? Catharine orders, yet?'

'Alas! yes, she orders?'

'Well, speak, sir! What does she order? I am a man; I have courage. Speak!'

'Alas! my dear sir, she orders— If it had not been by herself that the command had been given, I declare to you, my dear Mr Sutherland, that I would not have believed it.'

'But you make me die a thousand times. Let me see, sir, what has she ordered you to do?'

'She has ordered me to have you STUFFED!'

The poor banker uttered a cry of distress; then looking the master of the police in the face, said:

'But, Your Excellency, it is monstrous what you say to me; you must have lost your reason.'

'No, sir; I have not lost my reason; but I will certainly lose it during the operation.'

'But how have you—you who have said you are my friend a hundred times—you, in short, to whom I have had the honour to render certain services—how have you, I say, received such an order without endeavouring to represent the barbarity of it to Her Majesty?'

'Alas! sir, I have done what I could, and certainly what no one would have dared to do in my place. I besought Her Majesty to renounce her design, or at least to charge another than myself with the execution of it; and that with tears in my eyes. But Her Majesty said to me with that voice which you know well, and which does not admit of a reply: "Go, sir, and do not forget that it is your duty to acquit yourself without a murmur of the commissions with which I charge you."'

'And then?'

'Then, said the master of the police, "I lost no time in repairing to a very clever naturalist who stuffs animals for the Academy of Sciences; for in short, since there was not any alternative, I deemed it only proper, and out of respect for your feelings, that you should be stuffed in the best manner possible."

'And the wretch has consented?'

'He referred me to his colleague, who stuffs apes, having studied the analogy between the human species and the monkey tribe.'

'Well?'

'Well, sir, he awaits you.'

'How! he awaits me! But is the order so peremptory?'

'Not an instant must be lost, my dear sir; the order of Her Majesty does not admit of delay.'

'Without granting me time to put my affairs in order? But it is impossible!'

'Alas! it is but too true, sir.'

'But you will allow me first to write a letter to the Empress?'

'I know not if I ought; my instructions were very emphatic.'

'Listen! It is a last favour, a favour which is not refused to the greatest culprit. I entreat it of you.'

'But it is my situation which I risk.'

'And it is my life which is at stake.'

'Well, write; I permit it. However, I inform you that I do not leave you a single instant.'

'Thanks, thanks. Pray, request one of your officers to come, that he may convey my letter.'

The master of the police called a lieutenant of the Royal Guards, delivered to him the letter of poor Sutherland, and ordered him to bring back the answer to it immediately. Ten minutes afterwards, the lieutenant returned with the order to bring the banker to the imperial palace. It was all that the sufferer desired.

A carriage stood at the gate. Mr Sutherland entered it, and the lieutenant seated himself near him. Five minutes afterwards they were at the palace, where Catharine waited. They introduced the condemned man to her presence, and found Her Majesty in convulsions of laughter.

It was for Sutherland now to believe her mad. He threw himself at her feet, and seizing her hand in his, exclaimed: 'Mercy, madame! In the name of heaven, have mercy on me; or at the least tell me for what crime I have deserved a punishment so horrible.'

'But my dear Monsieur Sutherland,' replied Catharine with all the gravity she could command, 'this matter does not concern you at all!'

'How, Your Majesty, is it not a matter concerning me? Then whom does it concern?'

'Why, the dog of course which you gave me, and which died yesterday of indigestion. Then in my grief at this loss and in my very natural desire to preserve at least his skin, I ordered that fool Relieu to come to me, and said to him: "Monsieur Relieu, I have to request that you will have Sutherland immediately stuffed." As he hesitated, I thought that he was ashamed of such a commission; whereupon I became angry and dismissed him on his errand.'

'Well, madame,' answered the banker, 'you can boast that you have in the master of the police a faithful servant; but at another time, pray, I entreat of you, to explain better to him the orders which he receives.'

The four-footed Sutherland was duly promoted to a glass case *à la* the banker—relieved.

AN INTERNATIONAL POLAR EXPEDITION.

In a former paper on Polar Colonisation we mentioned that an American enthusiast had suggested that, with a view to the achievement of greater results, the enterprise of exploring the Arctic regions should be made an international one. A somewhat similar idea appears to have occurred about the same time to Count Wilczek, and Lieutenant Charles Weyprecht, of Arctic fame. After many months of careful consideration, these gentlemen lately issued at Vienna the programme of the work which they propose should be under-

taken by an International Polar Expedition. The elaborate scheme therein propounded was originally prepared with a view to its details being fully discussed by the International Meteorological Congress which was to have met at Rome in the month of September of last year, but which, owing to political events, it has been found necessary to postpone till the present year. The peculiarity of their project is that they aim at purely *scientific* exploration in the Arctic and Antarctic regions, and that they leave geographical discovery out of their programme, intending that it should be undertaken by a separate expedition. To accomplish the highly important end they have in view, they suggest that each of the states participating in the work should equip an expedition and despatch it to one of the stations enumerated by them. Each of the powers interested will be left to decide how long it will continue the work and what questions should be studied beyond those laid down in the international programme. The investigations to be undertaken in common will only include the phenomena of meteorology and terrestrial magnetism, *aurora borealis*, and the laws which govern the movements of ice. As of course uniformity and the utmost possible accuracy in the observations to be taken are absolutely necessary for purposes of comparison, the propounders of the scheme enter into very minute details, especially as regards the magnetic observations. The following are the places which are considered the most favourable for the purposes above indicated: (In the northern hemisphere) the north coast of Spitzbergen, the north coast of Novaya Zemlya, the vicinity of the North Cape of Finmark, the north coast of Siberia at the mouths of the Lena, New Siberia, Point Barrow at the north-east of Behring Strait (occupied by Maguire 1852-54), the Danish settlement on the west coast of Greenland, and the east coast of Greenland in about latitude 75°; (in the southern hemisphere) the neighbourhood of Cape Horn, Keeguelen or Macdonald Islands, and one of the groups south of the Auckland Islands. Each state interested, it may be mentioned in conclusion, must establish a station for a year at least, and conform strictly to the terms of the programme.

THE FIRST PRIMROSE.

A PRIMROSE awoke from its long winter sleep,
And stretched out its head through its green leaves to
peep;

But the air was so cold, and the wind was so keen,

And not a bright flower but itself to be seen.

'Alas!' sighed the Primrose, 'how useless am I,

As here all alone and half hidden I lie;

But I'll strive to be cheerful, contented to be,

Just a simple wild flower growing under a tree.'

Soon a maiden passed by, looking weary and sad,

In the bright early spring-time, when all should be glad,

But she spied the sweet Primrose so bright and so gay,

And the sight of it charmed all her sadness away;

And the Primrose gave thanks to the dear Lord above,

Who had sent it on such a sweet mission of love.

CATHARINE DAVISON.

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QUEEN'S MESSENGERS.

SOMEWHAT more than forty years ago, Mr Baillie Fraser published a lively and instructive volume under the title *A Winter's Journey (Tatâr) from Constantinople to Teheran*. Political complications had arisen between Russia and Turkey—an old story, of which we are witnessing a new version at the present time. The English government deemed it urgently necessary to send out instructions to our representatives at Constantinople and Teheran; and this could only be done in those days by means of Messengers bold and hardy enough to bear a great amount of fatigue in the saddle. Mr Fraser, intrusted with this duty, told the tale of his hard work. The word *Tatâr*, in Turkey, is applied to a native courier, guide, and companion, a hardy horseman who fulfils all these functions, speaking two or more languages, and ready to do the best that can be done to overcome the multiplied tribulations of regions almost roadless and aimless. When travelling *Tatâr*, these men have been known to make truly wonderful journeys on horseback. One of special character was made in 1815, when the British government wished to convey to Persia the stirring news of the escape of Napoleon from Elba. The British Embassy at Constantinople sent a Messenger from thence to Demavend, a Persian city nearly two thousand miles distant, across a dangerously rugged country; this amazing horse-ride was accomplished in seventeen days; averaging nearly a hundred and twenty miles a day.

Mr Baillie Fraser gives a vivid description of his own experience in this kind of life, riding day and night, and stopping only when the absolute need of a few hours' rest drove him into a wretched post-house or a mere hovel. It was 'a *Tatâr* journey of two thousand six hundred miles, which for fatigue and anxiety, and suffering from cold and exposure, I will venture to match against anything of the sort that ever was done.' First came seven hundred and fifty miles across European Turkey, from Belgrade to Constantinople; and then seven hundred along the whole

extent of Asia Minor to Amasia; but during the remaining seven weeks of the journey, he says: 'We have been wading night and day through interminable wastes of deep snow, exposed to all the violence of storms, drift, and wind, with the thermometer frequently from fifteen to twenty degrees below zero. Our clothes and faces and beards were clotted into stiff masses of ice; our boots, hard as iron, frozen to the stirrup; and our limbs tortured with pain, or chilled into insensibility by intense cold.'

Another famous journey across European Turkey, in 1849, has been described by Major Byng Hall, whose volume we shall presently advert to. A Messenger was directed to haste as fast as horse-flesh could carry him from Belgrade to the Morava, then on through Alexhuitz and Nissa, across the Balkans, and so on through Sofia to Constantinople—in great part the very route which Russian and Turkish troops have been devastating. When he crossed the Balkans at one of the passes or ravines, he had been riding continually night and day, and reeled backward and forward in his saddle; and more than once he nearly fell to the ground through exhaustion and want of sleep, at places where precipices were perilously near. He reached Constantinople in five days eleven hours from Belgrade, contending the whole time on horseback against wind, mud, and rain. Sir Stratford Canning (now Lord Stratford de Redcliffe), British ambassador at Constantinople, complimented him by saying that it was 'the quickest winter journey ever known.' Lord Palmerston adverted in the House of Commons to this journey, on an occasion when some members were animadverting on the great cost of the diplomatic service: 'As a proof of the zeal with which these royal Messengers render their services to the government of this country, I will mention an instance in which one of these gentlemen performed his duty on an occasion when it was required that he should make an extraordinary effort in order to carry a despatch of very considerable importance from the Foreign Office to Constantinople, at a time when a question was pending between Russia and Turkey. He was

days and nights in the saddle without quitting it, and performed the journey in the worst weather and under the greatest possible difficulties.*

Major Byng Hall, just named, has published a pleasant work under the title of the *Queen's Messenger*, recounting some of his own journeys and those of his colleagues. Amongst others was a sledge-journey to St Petersburg in midwinter; when his driver got intoxicated, drove into some sledges coming in the opposite direction, and nearly brought about a perilous scene of scuffle and bloodshed—all in a dark night amid enormous accumulations of snow. He draws attention to the varied qualifications necessary to any one who fills this office: 'No man, be he who he may, who holds the post of one of Her Majesty's foreign Messengers, and who must, for the due performance of the constant and arduous duties intrusted to him, be acquainted with foreign languages, but must obtain much knowledge by the wayside, impracticable if not impossible to the holiday traveller'—which all becomes essentially serviceable to him in subsequent journeys. A writer in *Blackwood* pleasantly spoke a few years ago of these 'foreign Mercuries, who travel throughout Europe at a pace only short of the telegraph. They are wonderful fellows, and must be very variously endowed. What capital sleepers, and yet so easily awakened! What a deal of bumping must their heads be equal to! What an indifference must they be endowed with to bad dinners, bad roads, bad servants, and bad smells! How patient must they be here, how peremptory there! How they must train their stomachs to long fastings, and their skin to little soap!'

And now for a brief account of the organisation of this small but remarkable body of men.

The Queen's Messengers of the present day are virtually *employees* of the Foreign Office; seeing that the conveyance of despatches to and from British ambassadors and representatives at foreign courts is the chief duty intrusted to them. Many a declaration of war has been thus conveyed.

About thirty years ago the House of Commons requested and obtained from the Foreign Office an account of the expense connected with the system of Queen's Messengers. The payments to these gentlemen were found to be made up in an odd way, such as no commercial firm would dream of adopting. There was a small annual salary, whether the Messenger were travelling or not. There were board wages, so much per day when in actual service. There was an allowance for his trouble, anxiety, and fatigue in riding and driving along—so much a mile if on horseback, so much in a vehicle, so much in a steam-boat. There was a reimbursement for actual outlay for railways, vehicles, horses, postillions, hostlers, road and bridge tolls, passports, loss on exchange of moneys, &c. This reimbursement was in nearly all cases more than he actually paid, owing to the liberal scale on which it was calculated.

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days and nights in the saddle without quitting it, and performed the journey in the worst weather and under the greatest possible difficulties.*

Major Byng Hall, just named, has published a pleasant work under the title of the *Queen's Messenger*, recounting some of his own journeys and those of his colleagues. Amongst others was a sledge-journey to St Petersburg in midwinter; when his driver got intoxicated, drove into some sledges coming in the opposite direction, and nearly brought about a perilous scene of scuffle and bloodshed—all in a dark night amid enormous accumulations of snow. He draws attention to the varied qualifications necessary to any one who fills this office: 'No man, be he who he may, who holds the post of one of Her Majesty's foreign Messengers, and who must, for the due performance of the constant and arduous duties intrusted to him, be acquainted with foreign languages, but must obtain much knowledge by the wayside, impracticable if not impossible to the holiday traveller'—which all becomes essentially serviceable to him in subsequent journeys. A writer in *Blackwood* pleasantly spoke a few years ago of these 'foreign Mercuries, who travel throughout Europe at a pace only short of the telegraph. They are wonderful fellows, and must be very variously endowed. What capital sleepers, and yet so easily awakened! What a deal of bumping must their heads be equal to! What an indifference must they be endowed with to bad dinners, bad roads, bad servants, and bad smells! How patient must they be here, how peremptory there! How they must train their stomachs to long fastings, and their skin to little soap!'

And now for a brief account of the organisation of this small but remarkable body of men.

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from the waste, and who was not unwilling to take temporary charge of Lenny. Sometimes, as a great concession, Sister Betty would be spared from weeding or cow-tending, to convoy Leonard, too young to go alone, to High Tor. As for Betty herself, she had been relegated, long ago in the by-gone days of her own short schooling, into the category of unteachables. She was a good girl; but two successive mistresses had given her up as a hopeless dunce, long before Betty began to earn two-thirds of her own living, and Ethel Gray to be mistress of High Tor school.

'I'll go and see Lenny. It is a half-holiday for me, you know, as well as for the children. How far is it, Betty? But I'm sure it is not too far, for I am a tolerable walker, if you will shew me the way,' said Ethel impulsively. Now this, as Betty knew, was the very consummation which her mother, whose perceptions had been for the time sharpened by the stimulus of maternal love, desired to bring about. The moorland lass was not much of a diplomatist, but she was quite well aware that to exaggerate the difficulties of an enterprise is often to damp the spirits of those who undertake it.

'It's not fur,' said Betty argumentatively; 'that's to say, she added, as her conscience smote her, 'not to call fur, but a goodish walk. But 'tis mortal fine to-day. And Lenny he'd be so glad!'

Ethel hesitated no longer, but merely mentioning her errand to the decent old village dame who was her housekeeper and factotum, threw her rain-coat over her arm—no bad precaution in that moist climate—and under Betty's guidance set forth. As to the beauty of the day, Betty was speaking within bounds when she described it as 'mortal fine.' The sparkling sky was as blue as a sapphire, and the breeze balmy enough to have blown over the orange groves and geranium hedges of Bermuda. It was, in short, one of those so-called 'gaudy' mornings which rarely, in the uncertain climate of our latitudes, finish as they have begun; least of all among the wilds of savage Dartmoor, the very cradle and nesting-place of bad weather.

A long walk it was, over rough and smooth, over wet and dry, by road and track of very various quality, to the cluster of moorland cottages, far off in an upland valley, where dwelt the Mudge family. Betty knew the mileage pretty well, but she kept the information to herself, lest, as she said in her own heart, 'school-mistress' should be 'scared.' She had a very poor opinion personally of the physical powers of book-learned fellow-creatures; but when she found how well her companion kept pace with her on the steep hill-side, she paused once to say, with shy approval: 'Tis yarely well ye walk, miss. We'll be there before long.'

A curiously contrasted pair would these two have appeared, had any competent observer been there to note the difference between them, as they scaled the edges of the lofty table-land, gashed by ravines and dotted by crags, which constitutes Dartmoor. Betty's personal appearance has been mentioned. To say that a young female looks lanky and gawky, may, however frequently such adjectives are upon feminine lips, be thought to imply some irreverence towards the sex. But it would be impossible to conceive an accurate idea of Betty Mudge without constructing an ideal

portrait of her that should depict her as gawky and lanky, a large-boned, freckled, well-meaning young creature, willingly accepting the responsibilities of a life of hard work and contented ignorance.

Ethel Gray, on the other hand, was a very beautiful girl. Beauty, as we know, is independent of its surroundings, and there is no reason why a village schoolmistress should not possess that dangerous gift. Her plain dress, her plain little hat, could not hide the fact that her figure was faultless, and that she possessed a lovely face and hair that in its dark luxuriance deserved to be called magnificent. What was more remarkable was the sweet dignity of her manner, frank and unpretending as it was. No one could be gentler than Ethel. Children were at home with her at once. But she seemed to be one of those who are born to be respected, without advancing any especial claim to consideration.

Lenny Mudge's sister ought to have known better than to have entered, with the rash confidence of youth, on what was really five miles of rough walking, on that most treacherous of days, locally denominated as 'spoiled,' when a sunny morning is succeeded by the oncoming of a mist as dense as if it had boiled up from the sullen shores of Cocytus or Acheron. The fog fell, as Dartmoor fogs did fall before Britain saw the Roman eagles, with the rapidity of a theatrical drop-scene cutting off the mimic presentment from the clapping hands and levelled opera-glasses of the spectators. Only in this case it was stern reality.

'Doan't you be afeard, miss,' said Betty sturdily; 'I be moorland born and bred, and I'll hammer it out somehow.'

But this boast was more easy to make than to fulfil, for everywhere hung, poised in air, something like a silvery veil, shutting out from sight all familiar landmarks, and rendering it impossible to distinguish any object two paces distant. The mist had fallen so abruptly from the huge Tors, as it seemed, that rose here and there like watch-towers of the waste, that a fanciful imagination might have conceived the seething vapour to represent a semi-transparent drapery, suddenly cast from a giant hand over land and sea.

But a minute or two before, Ethel had allowed her eyes to rest admiringly on the many-coloured surface of the vast moor, here robed in purple of imperial splendour, there of tenderest green, and anon brown or crimson or bluish gray, as shrub and berry and weed and wild-flower dappled the rolling ocean of heather. Then below was the cultured plain, furrowed by thickly wooded clefts, through which the Dartmoor streams ran brawling to the sea, that lay calm and blue and flecked with white sails, so plainly within the range of vision. And now all was changed, and it was fog, fog, and fog only, girdling in the wayfarers on every hand, and there was no knowing whither to turn.

Betty Mudge did her best; but her zeal outran her discretion; and indeed the task of pilot in that rolling mist was no easy one. Had there but been a hard road, though never so narrow, beneath her feet, the girl would have gone on cheerfully enough. But there was no real road for about half the distance between High Tor and Shaws, as that solitary spot where stood the abode of the Mudges

was called, merely a congeries of winding cart-ruts, among which, in moderately clear weather, it was facile for one who knew the country to make shortcuts at pleasure.

'If we were to go back?' suggested Ethel, after a while; but Betty Mudge by no means accepted the proposition.

'It be just as easy, miss, to go forrard as to go backrard,' returned Lenny's sister doggedly; 'but what's main hard in the thick is to know which is which.'

They went on for some time without speaking. 'I was listening,' at last said the young guide abruptly, 'for a sheep-bell. If I could but hear that, shepherd would put us right.'

But though Ethel hearkened also, in hopes of catching the far-off tinkle of a bell from some folded flock, the silence remained as unbroken as though man, with all his works and ways, had been banished from the island. Nothing but blinding mist to greet the eye, nothing but heather and peat and stones beneath the feet, as the two stumbled and groped forward, going deeper and deeper, for aught they knew, into the heart of the wilderness. The misty vapour heaved and rolled like a billowy sea, taking fantastic shapes, here of a threatening giant, there of a winding-sheet spread by no mortal hand, there again of a battlemented castle rearing its towers aloft.

There are landscape painters—even aspiring young Associates, newly elected, of the Royal Academy—who it would have greatly gratified to have been on the moor that day, and to have seen the fluctuating hues of the mist, here fleecy snow, there translucent silver, elsewhere such pearly grays as the colour-box fails to render, while sunwards a faint pale shimmering streak of tender opal stretched, like Jacob's ladder, almost from heaven to earth. It was a study worthy of an artist's heed too, the manner in which the bare bleak Tors, red, brown, gray, according to the nature of the stone, cropped up from the moor, each crag rising out of the peaty soil like the bones of a buried Titan. But poor Ethel became very tired as she wandered on under the aimless guidance of Betty Mudge, who was herself tired, and who could but guess, and that wildly, in which direction home might lie.

'Ware!' she cried, as Ethel was about to plant her foot unrespectingly on an inviting patch of emerald turf. 'Yon's bog, you is, deep enow to suck down a horse to the saddle-laps. Never trust the green, and the greener the softer, miss. Send, my moun't a strayed to Havensmoor or the Blackpool, for there be swamps there would swallow bigger nor we. Gran'father, they tell, smothered in Blackpool, but 'were in winter-time.'

Then there came creeping like insidious enemies into Ethel's mind all the weird legends which since her stay at High Tor she had heard regarding the waste. There were tales of belated horsemen and lonely foot-travellers overwhelmed by snow-storms in winter, and lying dead among the drifts, the prey of the hill-fox and the carrion crow. There were tales too of those who had been lost in the blinding mist, and had either perished in some quagmire, or died miserably of hardship and exhaustion, after many hours of walking on the moor.

'It ben't of no manner o' good!' said Betty, after another long spell of silence. 'We may

walk till we drop. I'm main tired myself. And what's the use? For oughter we know, we may be going round and round.'

Ethel too was weary, so weary that it was with difficulty she could raise her voice to urge on her now desponding companion the expediency of a renewed effort. 'Surely, surely,' she said, 'we shall, if we persevere, come upon some road or see the lights—for it must be getting late—in some farm or cottage.'

'One Tor be terrible like another,' returned Betty with a sob. 'I got no more notion whirrabouts we be, nor if I were fresh dropped out of the moon. I'm no use here, and can hardly drag. And what'll mother say?'

And the girl sat down on a fragment of rock which jutted from a bluff stony Tor rising overhead, and began to weep. And then there forced itself on Ethel's mind the dreadful thought that they had perhaps really been walking in a circle until their forces were spent, and might die of fatigue, cold, and even hunger before they should be discovered. Who could tell when the fog would disperse! The mist might overhang the lofty table-land of the moor for whole days, possibly for weeks, cutting the lost ones as completely off from succour as some shipwrecked mariner on his desolate isle. No sound floated to Ethel's ears as she listened long and eagerly. 'Don't cry, Betty; don't cry. Something—I know not what—tell me that we shall get through this safely yet,' said Ethel, as she too took her seat upon the rock, and laid her hand kindly on that of her young companion. But Betty only blubbered the more furiously.

'Tain't so much for me, miss!' she said. 'It be my fault, every bit on't. I brought you here. And Lenny—and mother'—The train of ideas thus conjured up acted so strongly on the untutored imagination of Betty Mudge, that she wept so loudly and dolefully that her wails re-echoed through the solitary waste.

What was that? Surely a human voice calling aloud at some distance through the fog, as if in answer to Betty's inarticulate plaint. Yes, there was no mistake this time. It was the hearty halloo of a deep voice, and the words were: 'Ho! I say, there! What ails you? Anything wrong?'

'We be lost in fog!' called out the girl by way of answer.

'It's a woman or a child,' exclaimed another voice from the mist. 'Push on, Etes! The cry came from this direction to the left.' And presently, bursting through the floating wreaths of vapour, appeared the figures of two men, the shorter and sturdier of whom, a gamekeeper by his velveteen coat and leathern gaiters, and the metal dog-whistle at his button-hole, led a pony with a creel strapped to the saddle-bow.

'Here they are, my Lord!' ejaculated this functionary, as he caught sight of the forlorn two upon the rock. The gentleman to whom he spoke came hurrying up across the stony ground, a fishing-rod in his hand.

'Don't be frightened, my little maid,' he called out cheerily to Betty, who wept more unreasonably than ever, now that help was near; and then, catching a glimpse of Ethel's pale beautiful face as she looked up, he exclaimed: 'Why, this is a lady—here!' and instinctively he raised his hat. 'Stop! It is Miss Gray from

the village, if I am not mistaken.—You must let me see you safely off the moor, I live near, at High Tor; though I daresay you do not know me, Miss Gray. I have seen you at church.'

'Yes, I know you, Lord Harrogate,' returned Ethel, trying to rise, but sinking back fainting and giddy on her rocky seat. 'I am sorry to give you trouble, but——' Her voice failed her, and her eyes seemed to be darkened. The quick revulsion of feeling, from what was all but sheer despair to the consciousness of being saved, had intensified the effects of great physical fatigue. She heard the young man's voice addressing herself, but could not distinguish the words because of the low droning sound that filled her ears as she sat passive on the rock. Who he was she quite well knew. It was not possible for the member of a small congregation such as that in High Tor church to be ignorant of the features of so notable an occupant of Lord Wolverhampton's pew as the Earl's son and heir. Tall, handsome, and manly, Lord Harrogate was worth looking at for his own sake; but Ethel had never thus looked upon him until she found herself thus confronted with him in the mist, as her rescuer from certain suffering, perhaps from death.

'If you are able to walk, Miss Gray,' said Lord Harrogate earnestly, 'will you take my arm and lean on me? My servant will charge himself with the child here; indeed I do not think he can do better than to set her on the pony, as she seems so tired. We must all of us rely on Bates's guidance to get clear of the waste. Happily, he is a thorough moorman, and can pick his way where I should be at fault.'

'Ay, ay, my Lord,' returned Bates, flattered by the compliment, but honestly unwilling to be pranked in borrowed plumage. 'But if we were t'other side o' Pinkney Ridge or Crammere way, I'd not be so gay ready to take the lead in a fog like this one. I've heard of moormen straying round and round, and lying down to die in a drift within gunshot o' their own house-door. But we were on the hard path just now, so if we can but strike it again, we're safe.'

They started, Betty Mudge perched sideways on the pony, which the keeper led; while Ethel, in spite of her protestation that she could walk unaided, was glad to avail herself of the support of Lord Harrogate's arm. It was not all plain sailing, for so dense was the fog that even the experienced keeper was puzzled for a time, until his sharp ear caught the well-known babble of a brook.

'Tis running water!' cried Bates in triumph. 'Safest plan on the moor is to follow running water, for that won't deceive. We'll win through it.'

And indeed a short half-hour brought the party to the firm high-road, with the gates of High Tor Park, topped by their stone wyverns, within sight. Betty Mudge, who announced herself as having an aunt in the village at whose cottage she could pass the night, was despatched under convoy to that relative's abode. But Ethel Grey looked so worn and ill, that Lord Harrogate insisted on her retaining his arm up the carriage-drive leading to the house, where she could receive the attention her state required.

'My mother and sisters will take care of you, I know,' he said, as he supported her slow steps

through the park, where the fog, so dense upon the frowning hills above, only floated in fitful wreaths. The house was reached, and great was the surprise of those within when Lord Harrogate appeared with Ethel, pale, patient, exhausted, but beautiful still, her dark hair and her dress dripping with wet, leaning on his strong arm. The Countess was kind; and her daughters, beautiful golden-haired Lady Gladys, honest-eyed earnest Lady Maud, even Lady Alice, a clever child of twelve, were still more kind. A bright wood-fire was soon blazing in what was called the Yellow Room; and Ethel, seated as near to the crackling logs as her chair could be placed, and propped up with cushions, was able to dry her wet tresses and drenched garments; while Lord Harrogate's sisters, and Lady Maud in especial, pressed her to partake of tea and other refreshments, and spoke soothingly to her, and were very full of tender womanly sympathy.

Lady Maud, the Earl's second daughter, knew the new school-mistress better than did the others, and liked her. She was herself a constant visitor at the school-house, and had heard many and many an urchin stammer through his or her lessons there, and could therefore the better appreciate the motive which had led Ethel into her late danger, through a natural wish to comfort little Lenny on his bed of fever. Warmth, and that kindness of manner which women shew more than we do, did much towards bringing Ethel back from that death-in-life which excessive fatigue and chill tend to produce; and when the carriage was, in spite of her remonstrance, 'ordered round,' to convey her home to the school, she had strength enough to walk unaided to the door. Lord Harrogate had disappeared. The Earl had not as yet returned from some meeting of magistrates. 'I will come down to see you, Miss Gray, to-morrow, if I can,' said Lady Maud, as the carriage drove off.

CHAPTER VI.—SIR SYKES MAKES AN ANNOUNCEMENT.

'Lucy, my dear, and Blanche too, I want to know how you would like to receive here, at Carbery, a young lady who is a total stranger to all of us; but who, if she comes at all, comes with a distinct understanding that this house, until she marries, is her home. I ask you this, my dears, because I have received a letter'—and the baronet pointed to a black-bordered envelope that lay, with others, beside his plate—'inclosing one penned, long ago, by a hand which can write no more. George Willis—Major, when he died, in the Indian army—was one of my earliest and truest friends. He is dead now. He left behind him this one girl, his only and motherless child, and—and he begs me, in a letter, indorsed "After my death to be forwarded to Sir Sykes Denzil," to become the guardian of this—this poor orphaned thing. How do you say, my girls? Shall we have her here at Carbery, or not?'

It was very neatly and prettily put on the part of Sir Sykes, and the appeal was all the more effective because of the quietude and cool indifference of the baronet's ordinary manner. He was a cold, unemotional person, in the everyday routine of life; and hence the quivering of his lips, the faltering of his voice, added much of

pathos to what might otherwise have seemed commonplace.

As for the answer to the question asked, could there be a doubt of it! It is to the credit of a woman's heart that it always, when a plea is well urged, responds to the Open Sesame of compassion. They may not, as men do, seek out hidden wrongs to be righted and unseen pang to be assuaged. But the distress that lies at their door they seek to comfort; and had the young ladies of Carbery been very much poorer than they were, their reply to their father's question would have been as generously outspoken.

'By all means, yes, papa, let us have the poor girl here—this Miss—Willis I think is her name; and we will try to make her happy. How sad! And Blanche and Lucy were all but in tears over the woes of this Anglo-Indian orphan; while Jasper, hiding his face behind his coffee-cup, reflected that "the governor" was a cool hand, and did his little bit of acting in a manner worthy of Burutta himself.'

In most houses of sufficient dignity to own a special letter-bag, the temporary office of post-master is publicly discharged. The old Earl of Wolverhampton, for instance, found it pleasant to sort and classify the motley mass of correspondence which came daily to High Tor; but he would almost as soon have opened a servant's letter as have opened the bag otherwise than in the presence of guests and kindred. Carbery Chase, however, was not High Tor, and Sir Sykes Denzil was a very different family chief from his noble neighbour. The baronet was an early riser; as are many men who have spent much of their lives in India; and he chose that the post-bag should be brought to him in the library an hour or so before the usual assembling for breakfast. Jasper, who was of a suspicious temper, resented this exercise of parental authority; but he was wrong. There may have been passages in Sir Sykes's life which would not, if published, have redounded to his credit, but tampering with letters was not congenial to him. He never gave a second glance to any envelope addressed to Captain Denzil or the captain's sisters, and was as loyal a custodian of the family correspondence as any gentleman in the whole county of Devon. There was this advantage in the baronet's habit as regarded the post-bag, that nobody could tell what letters Sir Sykes received or when he did receive them. There are many of us, and those not the least loved or esteemed, whose letters are as it were public property, and with whom reticence on the subject of a missive newly received by the post would diffuse disquiet and perhaps dismay through the domestic circle. Sir Sykes had never been one of those who wear their hearts, metaphorically, on their sleeves; he told those around him as much as he wished them to know, and no more.

There was quite a flutter of pleasurable excitement among the Denzil girls at the prospect of a new member of the household, a new face at Carbery. They were sorry for this poor Miss Willis, sorer for her by far than for the many orphans whose benevolent is notified to us every day by a grim list of deaths dryly chronicled in the newspaper. And they felt doubly disposed to welcome her and be good to her in that she was lonely and sad, and that her presence would introduce a new element into Carbery. They made no sacrifice in

giving a cheerful acquiescence to their father's suggestion that his ward should be received beneath his roof. In such a house the maintenance of an extra inmate was of no moment at all. But had Sir Sykes been living in furnished lodgings, and forced to look twice at half-a-crown, those honest girls would still not have grudged a share of their hashed mutton and scanty house-room to the daughter of an old friend of their father's.

'I don't think, sir, that I remember to have heard you mention the Major's name,' said Jasper, stolidly buttering his toast, but furtively eyeing his father from beneath his pale eyelashes.

'I think you have heard it,' answered Sir Sykes, with a self-possession that all but staggered Jasper's unbelief. 'We were quartered together for years at Allahabad, Cawnpore, and Lahore. There were Reynolds and L'Estrange, and Moreton who is living yet, and this poor fellow Willis; the old set, with whom I was intimate. I don't often bore listeners who have never been in India, with the details of my eastern experiences, else I think that the name of Major—or Captain—George Willis would be tolerably familiar here.'

That the girls, in their newly awakened interest, should ask questions was but natural. But their father had not very much beyond the substance of his original announcement to communicate. He had, he said, but a vague recollection of Mrs Willis, his friend's wife, a bride when Sir Sykes returned to Europe, and who had now been dead for some years. She was a quiet domestic little person, from Wales or Ireland, the baronet did not know which; and she had some pittance of annual income, which would no doubt go to her child at the husband's decease. Major Willis had no private means, at least so Sir Sykes thought. There was a London lawyer, however, who knew all about the financial affairs of the orphan, and who would of course render a proper statement to the baronet's solicitors. Miss Willis would be entitled, as the child of an Indian officer, to no pension, being, as Sir Sykes understood, over the age of twenty-one; but of that again he was not sure, not being certain of the exact age of his friend's daughter. She had no very near relatives, and had never, to Sir Sykes's knowledge, been in England before.

'It was the chaplain of the military station who wrote,' continued Sir Sykes, 'inclosing in his letter that which poor Willis had left for myself; and, unless I telegraph to veto the arrangement, you are likely to see Miss Ruth—did I say that her name was Ruth—very soon, since she is to start by the next mail from Bombay.'

'Well,' muttered Jasper to himself, as some time later in the morning he sauntered through the plantations, the path across which made a short cut from Carbery Chase to Lord Wolverhampton's park at High Tor, 'I have seen some cool hands; but— Well, well! It was neatly done, very neatly. If the governor had not had the rare luck to come into a fortune, he would have been as fit to make one as any man I ever came across.' The young man, whose preference for crooked ways was congenial, and who knew of no road to Fortune's temple save miry and devious ones, began really to feel an admiration for his father's abilities, since he had discovered to what profound depths of dissimulation the baronet could descend. His own craft had enabled him to lift a corner of

the fair seeming mask which Sir Sykes wore before the world, but as yet his knowledge was too imperfect to enable its possessor to make capital of the secret. Could he once—

'Why, Captain Denzil?' exclaimed a ringing girlish voice, 'I could almost give you credit for poetic reveries, so complete is your unconsciousness of the mere commonplace world around you. You had all but passed us without a word or a bow.'

Jasper could not repress a slight start, as he found himself in presence of the three Ladies De Vere and of their brother Lord Harrogate, in the main avenue of the park. The young man's moody countenance brightened at once.

'I am not, as a rule, greatly given to dreaming in broad daylight, Lady Gladys,' he said good-humouredly; 'and as for the poetry, I'll promise to dedicate my first volume of sonnets, or whatever they call them, to yourself. I am afraid, though, you will have to wait a little before I take a plunge into literature.'

'Of books—of a sort, you have been rather a diligent compiler,' said Lord Harrogate, smiling.

Jasper bit his lip; but it was in a careless tone that he rejoined: 'That's only too true; but let me tell you, Harrogate, there goes more of hard thinking to the composition of a betting-book than people usually suppose—I was on my way to the house, meaning to inflict a little of my dullness on you, Lady Maud, but you are early abroad.'

'Yes; and you may as well walk down with us,' said Lady Maud. 'We are going to the school-mistress, fares after her moorland adventure of Saturday. You heard of it, Captain Denzil?'

No; Jasper had not heard of it. And on receiving an account of it from Lady Maud's lips, the captain said, with never so little of a sneer, that the episode was 'quite romantic.'

'Come and see the heroine of it,' said bright-eyed Lady Gladys; 'and you who affect to admire nothing, will be compelled to admit that you have seen a face such as we very seldom behold except in a picture.'

The party walked on together thus chatting until they reached the village. The young people of the two great houses, High Tor and Carbery Chase, had naturally been well acquainted with one another from an early period; and the two elder of the De Vere girls were disposed to pity Jasper rather than to blame him for the recklessness that had brought about his exile from the haunts of fashion. But the captain knew that Lord Harrogate and he were uncongenial spirits. He did not like Harrogate, and he had a shrewd idea that Harrogate despised him. We cannot, however, be very eclectic in the depths of the country as regards those with whom we associate, and hence these two young men, of natures so dissimilar, tolerated one another because of the ancient friendship existing between their families.

The school was reached, and Ethel's mistress, still pale, but lovely as one of the white roses in her tiny garden, came forward to receive her distinguished visitors, and paid her tribute of thanks to Lord Harrogate for the service he had rendered her, with a modest grace which was all the more charming from its extreme simplicity of words and manner.

'I was too weak and faint the other evening,

my Lord, to say what I felt as to your—your great kindness.'

And a princess could not have spoken better. It was Lord Harrogate who seemed embarrassed, as your honest Briton, gentle or simple, is embarrassed by being thanked. And then, while Lady Maud eagerly told how jelly and hothouse fruit and port wine had been despatched from High Tor to the moorland cottage for the benefit of little Lenny Mudge, and how the parish doctor spoke hopefully of his small patient, Jasper looked at Ethel Gray with a sort of wonder, as at the most beautiful woman that he had ever seen, and the most thoroughly a lady, not even excepting Lady Gladys De Vere. But he said nothing, and lounged carelessly off with the party when adieux had been exchanged with Miss Gray.

STORY OF CAPTAIN GLASS.

ABOUT the time of the accession of George III. to the throne, few domestic events made a greater sensation in the papers and periodicals of the day than the adventures and fate of a sea-captain named George Glass, especially in connection with a mutiny on board the brig *Earl of Sandwich*. This remarkable man, who was one of fifteen children of John Glass, noted as the originator of the Scottish sect known as the Glasites, was born at Dundee in 1725. After graduating in the medical profession, he made several voyages, as surgeon of a merchant-ship (belonging to London), to the Brazils and the coast of Guinea; and in 1764, he published, by Dodsley, an interesting work in one volume quarto, entitled *The History of the Discovery and Conquest of the Canary Islands, translated from a Spanish manuscript*.

He obtained command of a Guinea trader, and made several successful voyages, till the war with Spain broke out in January 1762. Having saved a good round sum, he equipped a privateer, and took command of her as captain, to cruise against the French and Spaniards; but he had not been three days at sea, when his crew mutinied, and sent him that which is called in sea-phraseology a round-robin (a corruption of an old French military term, the *ruban rond*, or round ribbon), in which they wrote their names in a circle; hence none could know who was the leader.

Arming himself with his cutlass and pistols, Glass came on deck, and offered to fight, hand to hand, any man who conceived himself to be wronged in any way. But the crew, knowing his personal strength, his skill and resolution, declined the challenge. He succeeded in pacifying them by fair words; and the capture of a valuable French merchantman a few days after put them all in excellent humour. This gleam of good fortune was soon after clouded by an encounter with an enemy's frigate, which though twice the size of his privateer, Glass resolved to engage; and for two hours they fought broadside to broadside, till another French vessel bore down on him, and he was compelled to strike his colours, after half his crew had been killed and he had received a musket-shot in the shoulder.

He remained for some time a French prisoner of war in the Antilles, where he was treated with excessive severity; but upon being exchanged, he resolved to embark the remainder of his fortune in

another privateer, and 'have it out,' as he said, with the French and Dons. But he was again taken in action, and lost everything he had in the world.

On being released a second time, he was employed by London merchants in several voyages to the West Indies, in command of ships that fought their way without convoy; and according to a statement in the *Annual Register*, he was captured no less than seven times. But after various fluctuations of fortune, when the general peace took place in 1763, he found himself possessed of two thousand guineas prize-money, with the reputation of being one of the best merchant captains in the Port of London.

About that time, a Company there resolved to make an attempt to form a settlement on the west coast of Africa, by founding a harbour and town midway between the Cape de Verd and the river Senegal. In the London and other papers of the day we find many statements urging the advantage of opening up the Guinea-trade; among others, a strange letter from a merchant, who tells us he was taken prisoner in a battle on that coast, and that when escaping he 'crossed a forest within view of the sea, where there lay elephants' teeth in quantities sufficient to load one hundred ships.'

In the interests of this new Company Glass sailed in a ship of his own to the coast of Guinea, and selected and surveyed a harbour at a place which he was certain might become the centre of a great trade in teak and cam woods, spices, palm oil and ivory, wax and gold. Elated with his success, he returned to England, and laid his scheme before the ministry, among whom were John Earl of Sandwich, Secretary of State, and the Earl of Hillsborough, Commissioner of Trade and Plantations.

With truly national patience and perseverance, he underwent all the procrastination and delays of office, but ultimately obtained an exclusive right of trading to his own harbour for twenty years. Assisted by two merchants—the Company would seem to have failed—he fitted out his ship anew, and sailed for the intended harbour; and sent on shore a man who knew the country well, to make propositions of trade with the natives, who put him to death the moment they saw him.

Undiscouraged by this event, Captain Glass found means to open up a communication with the king of the country, to lay before him the wrong that had been done, and the advantages that were certain to accrue from mutual trade and barter. The sable potentate affected to be pleased with the proposal, but only to the end that he might get Glass completely into his power; but the Scotsman was on his guard, and foiled him.

The king then attempted to poison the whole crew by provisions which he sent on board impregnated by some deadly drug. Glass, by his previous medical knowledge perhaps, discovered this in time; but so scarce had food become in his vessel, that he was compelled to go with a few hands in an open boat to the Canaries, where he hoped to purchase what he wanted from the Spaniards.

In his absence the savages were encouraged to attack the ship in their war-canoes; but were repulsed by a sharp musketry-fire opened upon them by the remainder of the crew, who losing heart by the protracted absence of the captain,

quitted his fatal harbour, and sailed for the Thames, which they reached in safety.

Meanwhile the unfortunate captain, after landing on one of the Canaries, presented a petition to the Spanish governor to the effect that he might be permitted to purchase food; but that officer, inflamed by national animosity, cruelly threw him into a dark and damp dungeon, and kept him there without pen, ink, or paper, on the accusation that he was a spy. Being thus utterly without means of making his case known, he contrived another way of communicating with the external world. One account has it that he concealed a pencilled note in a loaf of bread which fell into the hands of the British consul; another states that he wrote with a piece of charcoal on a ship-biscuit and sent it to the captain of a British man-of-war that was lying off the island, and who with much difficulty, and after being imprisoned himself, effected the release of Glass. The latter, on being joined by his wife and daughter, who had come in search of him, set sail for England in 1763, on board the merchant brig *Earl of Sandwich*, Captain Cochrane.

Glass doubtless supposed his troubles were now over; but the knowledge that much of his property and a great amount of specie, one hundred thousand pounds, belonging to others, was on board, induced four of the crew to form a conspiracy to murder every one else and seize the ship. These mutineers were respectively George Gidley, the cook, a native of the west of England; Peter M'Kulie, an Irishman; Andrew Zekerman, a Hollander; and Richard L. Quintin, a Londoner. On three different nights they are stated to have made the attempt, but were baffled by the vigilance of Captain Glass, rather than that of his countryman, Captain Cochrane; but at eleven o'clock at night on the 30th of November 1765, it chanced, as shewn at their trial, that these four miscreants had together the watch on deck, when the *Sandwich* was already in sight of the coast of Ireland; and when Captain Cochrane, after taking a survey aloft, was about to return to the cabin, Peter M'Kulie brained him with 'an iron bar' (probably a marine-spike), and threw him overboard.

A cry that had escaped Cochrane alarmed the rest of the crew, who were all despatched in the same manner as they rushed on deck in succession. This slaughter and the din it occasioned roused Captain Glass, who was below in bed; but he soon discovered what was occurring, and after giving one glance on deck, rushed away to get his sword. M'Kulie imagining the cause of his going back, went down the steps leading to the cabin, and stood in the dark, expecting Glass's return, and suddenly seized his arms from behind; but the captain being a man of great strength, wrenched his sword-arm free, and on being assailed by the other three assassins, plunged his weapon into the arm of Zekerman, when the blade became wedged or entangled. It was at length wrenched forth, and Glass was slain by repeated stabs of his own weapon, while his dying cries were heard by his wife and daughter—two unhappy beings who were ruthlessly thrown overboard and drowned.

Besides these four victims, James Pincent, the mate, and three others lost their lives. The mutineers now loaded one of the boats with the money, chests, and so forth, and then scuttled the

Sandwich, and landed at Ross on the coast of Ireland. But suspicion speedily attached to them; they were apprehended; and confessing the crimes of which they had been guilty, were tried before the Court of King's Bench, Dublin, and sentenced to death. They were accordingly executed in St Stephen's Green, on the 10th of October 1765.

AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ROMANCE.

On a bright cold day in April 1719, a travelling carriage with three postillions dashed, full of the importance which always attends a fashionable well-built vehicle, into the famous but not progressive town of Innsbruck. The carriage contained four persons, said to be going to Loretto on pilgrimage—the Comte and Comtesse de Cernes, with the brother and sister of the comtesse; and as the aristocratic party alighted at their hotel, they created some sensation among those who clustered round the porch in the clear sharp twilight. The comtesse and her sister were very much enveloped in furs, and wore travelling masks, which effectually screened their faces from the vulgar gaze, and diverted the curiosity of the homely Tyrolese to the undisguised figures of the comte and the comtesse's brother. The former was the statelier of the two, but the latter was universally pronounced to be *ein herrlicher Mensch*. There was a certain sprightly grace in his movements which yet did not detract from the dignity essential in those days to a gentleman, and which would have saved him from being addressed with too great familiarity. The news soon circulated among the loungers that the fresh arrivals were Flemings; and the pleasant blue eyes of the comte and his brother-in-law—though certainly not the sprightly grace of the latter—accorded with these floating accounts of their origin.

The pretty Tyrolese hostess, whose face was so charmingly set off by the trim smartness of her velvet bodice and scarlet petticoat, together with various silver chains, gleefully returned to her parlour and her burly good-tempered husband, after attending the ladies to their apartments. She had seen the Comtesse de Cernes without her furs and travelling mask, dressed in lilac camlet turned up with silk; so handsome, so gracious, so talkative, that the hostess thought she must be French; for the hostess had seen plenty of French people before now, besides Flemings. The comtesse was dark-haired and dark-eyed; her sister who had also divested herself of her mask, did not equal her in appearance. Every one at the inn was glad that the amiable party from Flanders were going to rest there four days.

Their supper was ordered in a private room, where the host and hostess waited on them in person, and consequently had the best of it with the loungers afterwards. The two gentlemen were in good spirits, and the hostess thought their talk none the less amusing for being in a language which she did not understand. Their laughing looks and easy action conveyed to her mind a sufficient sense of fun to make her fair face shine placidly in sympathy. Altogether they were the liveliest Flemings she had ever seen; and their good-humour seemed to be shared by the three postillions, two of whom were Walloons and one

Italian, and who were making themselves very popular among the *habitues* of the inn.

'Well, this is a pleasant little town of yours, *mes amis*,' said the vivacious Walloon outsider, who contrasted strikingly with his great, tall, quietly smiling companion. 'One could die of ennui here as well as at Liege.'

'No, you could not,' returned a long spare poetic Tyrolese, who spent most of his evenings at the inn, but never drank; notwithstanding which peculiarity he and the host were warm friends. 'We mountain-folk are not dull; our hills and our torrents permit of no dullness.'

'Very well perhaps for you who are born to it, to hang by your eyelids on rocky ledges, or balance yourselves over what are called in verses the silver threads of waterfalls, in pursuit of an undoubtedly clever and pretty little animal; but all that would be dull work to us. And then you have not a *noblesse*. What should we do without ours? There would be no one to whom one could be postillion.'

'We are our own *noblesse*,' said the spare poetic Tyrolese.

'And you cannot say, Claude,' observed the tall Walloon, 'that Innsbruck is without *noblesse* at the present moment; nay more, it contains royalty in the shape of two captive princesses!'

'One of them the grand-daughter of the hero who saved this empire from the Turks, for which the Emperor now keeps her in durance.'

'Take care, Monsieur,' said the host (he pronounced 'Monsieur' execrably); 'we are all the Kaiser's loyal subjects here in Tyrol.'

'Pardon, *mein Wirth*,' replied Claude, who pronounced German as badly as the host did French. 'You know we men who run about the world laugh at everything, and too often let our tongues run faster than our feet.'

'And after all,' observed the Italian, 'it is doing the young princess no bad turn to prevent her marrying a prince out of place, who is not likely to recover his situation.'

The Flemings spent the few days of their sojourn at Innsbruck in visiting the churches and seeing what was to be seen in the town. The Comtesse de Cernes's brother was the busiest of the party. On the morning after his arrival he met in a church porch a rather impish-looking boy in the dress of a 'long-haired page,' and the two held a brief colloquy. To this stylish page, in whom the rather shapeless Slavonic type of countenance was widened out by smiles of assurance, the gentleman from Flanders delivered a letter, together with a wonderful snuff-box, cut out of a single turquoise, 'for his mistress to look at.' On the three remaining days likewise the two met in different spots; the boy restored the snuff-box, and brought some letters written in a fashionable pointed hand, in return for those with which the Fleming had intrusted him.

The party were to set out on their southward way at two o'clock on the morning of the 28th of April. The evening of the 27th was overshadowed by clouds, driven by a sharp north-east wind. Notwithstanding the aspects of the weather, the brother of the Comtesse de Cernes, standing in the midst of his little party in their private room, donned his cocked-hat and surcoat.

'Well, Wogan,' said the comte, 'if practice makes perfect, you are a professor in the art of effecting escapes. After having burst your way

out of Newgate, and been valued at five hundred English guineas (much below your worth of course), and cooled your spirit for some hours on the roof of a London house, and reached France safely after all, you ought to be able to abstract a young lady from the careless custody of Heister and his sentinels.'

'I shall be ashamed if I fail, after wringing from Prince Sobieski his consent to the attempt, and after his giving me the Grand Vizier's snuff-box; but I always find that doing things for other people is more difficult than doing them for one's self.'

'I should say she was a clever girl,' remarked the comte, 'and her page a clever page.'

'I wonder if Jannetton is ready?' said the comtesse, retiring into the bedroom occupied by the ladies, whence she soon emerged with her sister, who wore her *paletot*, and was smiling sufficiently to shew two rows of exquisitely white teeth. The comtesse on the contrary seemed somewhat affected. '*Adieu, Jannetton, mais au revoir*. There will be no danger to you, and the Archduchess will take care that you join me in Italy.'

Jannetton vowed she had no fears; and went forth into the deepening twilight, being shortly afterwards followed by the gentleman in cocked-hat and surcoat. Curiosity did not now dog the Flemish pilgrims, as it had done while they were altogether novelties, and the adventures slipped out unobserved. Meanwhile the 'long-haired page' was busy at one of the side-doors of the castle, where he was often wont to converse with the sentinel on duty.

'I don't envy you your trade, Martin,' he said, standing within the porch, to the hapless soldier pacing up and down in the keen wind. 'Glory is one thing and comfort another; but after all, very often no one hears of the glory, whereas the comfort is a tangible benefit. With the wind in the north-east and a snow-storm beginning, I at least would rather be comfortable than glorious.'

'A man who has seen campaigns thinks' but little of a snow-storm, Herr Kouska.

'But they generally put you into winter-quarters,' said Kouska, not wishing the sentinel to pique himself on his hardihood.

'No matter; a soldier learns what hardship is. I wish you could see a shot-and-shell storm instead of a snow-storm, or a forest of bayonets poked into your face by those demons of Irish in the French service.'

'Well, I say it is a shame not to treat you men better who have braved all that. See here; there is not even a sentry-box where you can nurse your freezing feet. Ugh!' And Kouska withdrew, presumably to warmer regions, while the soldier preserved a heroic appearance as he paced shivering on his narrow beat. But a few minutes later Kouska, stealing back to the door, saw that his martial friend was no longer at his post. The impish page pointed for a moment in ecstasy to a tavern temptingly visible from the sentry's beat. Then he darted back in delight to whence he came.

While the snow-clouds were gathering over Innsbruck, and before the Flemish chevalier had put on his surcoat, two ladies conversed in low tones in a chamber of the castle, of which General Heister was then the commandant. Only one

lady was visible; rather elderly, very stately, and somewhat careworn in appearance. But that the other speaker was of gentle sex and rank might be presumed from the tones of a voice which issued from the closed curtains of the bed. It might even be the voice of a young girl.

'I hope you will not get into trouble, mamma,' said the mysterious occupier of the bed.

'Hardly, if you write a proper letter on the subject of your departure, as the Chevalier Wogan advises. You must cover my complicity by begging my pardon.'

'I am afraid you must write it yourself, mamma, as I am *hors de combat*.'

'That would not be to the purpose, my dear child: the general would know my handwriting. I will push a table up to you; no one will disturb us now till your substitute comes.' She carried a light table, furnished with inkstand and *paper-tire* to the side of the bed, and made an aperture in the curtains, whence emerged the rosy bright-eyed face of a girl—who certainly did not look the invalid she otherwise appeared to be—and a white hand with an aristocratic network of blue veins.

'Will that do, mamma?' she asked, after covering a page with writing equally elegant and difficult to read. 'Have I apologised and stated my reasons for going, eloquently enough? Oh, how I hope that I shall some day be a queen in my own capital, and that you and papa will come and live there!'

The mamma sighed, as swift imagination presented to her mind all the obstacles to so glorious a consummation; but she expressed herself well satisfied with the letter, which she placed on the toilet table. 'I shall leave you now,' she said; 'you will find me in my room when you wish to bid me farewell.' She spoke with a certain stately sadness as she left the apartment. The next person who entered it was the Comtesse de Cernes's sister in her *paletot*, with a hood drawn forward over her face. She only said: '*Que votre Altesse me pardonne!*' (Pardon me, your Highness.)

Instantly the curtains divided once more, and the whole radiant vision of the mysterious invalid, clad in a dressing-gown richly trimmed with French lace, and shewing a face sparkling with animation, sprang forth laughing: 'You are the substitute?'

'Yes, your Highness!'

'I am sure I thank you very heartily, as well as Madame Misset and the Chevalier Wogan, and all the kind and loyal friends who are taking so much trouble for my comfort and for me.' The Archduchess will take good care of you, Jannetton.'

Jannetton again shewed her teeth in a courtly smile as she bowed deeply. She was already persuaded that she would be well cared for, in reward for the mysterious services she had come to render the captive lady. She disencumbered herself of her *paletot*, and looked amazingly like a very neat French waiting-maid until she had bedizened herself in the young lady's beautifully worked dressing-gown. Then she speedily disappeared behind the curtains of the bed; while the invalid, wrapping herself in the *paletot*, rushed into the next room to embrace with tears and smiles her anxious mamma, who said but little, and was now only eager to hurry her away. There too she took possession of her page, and a small box which

was to accompany her flight down the dark staircases. 'Your Highness will find all safe,' said the solemn page, who was careful to suppress outer signs of his innate roughness in the presence of his mistresses.

'The sentinel will not know me?' said the young lady.

'I am sure that he will not. Even if by chance he should look out from the window of the tower where he is now ensconced, it is not very likely that he would know your Highness.'

The black clouds which obscured the blueness of the April night had broken forth into a lashing storm of hail and wind before the young girl and the page sallied forth into the darkness. She could hardly keep her footing in the wet deserted streets; her hood was blown back, and her fair hair became dangerously visible; her paletot was splashed with the mud thrown up by her tread, and battered with hail; still she laughed at all difficulties, for a hero's blood flowed in her veins, and now and then steadied herself by a touch on the page's shoulder as they floundered on. At the corner of a street they suddenly came upon a dark figure, whose first appearance as it crossed her path caused the fugitive to start back in some alarm. But it was only the Comtesse de Cernes's brother; and the young lady's mind was relieved when with a swift grace he bent for a moment over her hand with the words: 'My princess, soon to be my sovereign, accept the homage, even in a dark street and a hail-storm, of your loyal servant, Charles Wogan.'

'Oh, my protector and good angel! is it indeed you?' replied the young lady. 'Be assured that I would gladly go through many dark streets and hail-storms to join my consort!'

And certainly this was a generous expression to use concerning a consort whom she had never seen. She and the Flemish chevalier were apparently old friends; and he had soon conducted her to the inn, which the page Konska, however, was not to enter with his mistress; he was to wait in a sheltered archway until the Comte de Cernes's travelling carriage should pick him up on its way out of Innsbruck in the darkness of early morning. With a grimace he departed for this covert, while his mistress was hurried into the warm atmosphere of the Comtesse de Cernes's bedroom, where that would-be Loretto pilgrim knelt and kissed her hand. But better even than loyal kisses were the bright wood-fire, the posset, and the dry clothes which also awaited her in this room.

'And you are Madame Misset, the noble Irish lady of whom my good angel Wogan speaks in his letters! How can I thank you for the trouble you take for me! I regard him quite in the place of my papa. But you all seem to be as good as he is!'

'Madame,' replied the lady thus addressed, with all the loyalty of eighteenth-century speech, 'your Highness knows that it is a delight to a subject to serve such a sovereign as our gracious prince; and all that I have done is at my husband's bidding.'

'With such subjects, I am sure it will not be long before he regains his throne. Ah, this delightful fire! Do you know, Madame, it is snowing and hailing outside as if it were January!'

If Madame Misset felt some concern at the thought of the impending journey—if not for her own sake, at least for that of her husband, she expressed none, except on her Highness's account.

However, her Highness gaily laughed at hardship and difficulty, and was not at all depressed at having left her mother in the castle-prison. Her only fear was that she should be missed from the castle before she had got clear of Innsbruck. But matters were too well arranged for so speedy a termination of the romance. By two o'clock of the windy spring morning the travelling carriage was ready, the Tyrolese landlord and landlady little suspecting, as they sped their parting guests, that the second lady who entered it in cloak and mask was any other than that sister of the Comtesse de Cernes who had arrived four days before.

'Oh, my good Papa Wogan!' exclaimed the latest addition to the party of pilgrims, as they were rolled into the darkness of that wild night, 'how delighted I am to be free again, and about to join my royal consort! I owe more than I can express to all, but most to you!' Which she might well say, seeing that it was 'Papa Wogan' who had selected her as the bride of this consort to whom her devotion was so great. She chattered brightly away, with the natural vivacity of eighteen in an adventure, rejoicing in her new-found freedom however cold it might be; and the only clouded face in the carriage was that of the Comtesse de Cernes. She was anxious on account of the vivacious little man who had formerly been postillion, and who was now riding far behind the carriage with his tall companion, to keep at bay possible couriers, who might soon be hurrying to the border fortresses with news that a prisoner had escaped the vigilance of General Heister at the Castle of Innsbruck. The two gentlemen in the carriage assured her that no harm would happen to two such dashing cavaliers; but perhaps the comtesse thought that to those who are safe it is easy to talk of safety. Not that any of the party were really safe, but the cheerfulness of the young lady, whose passport was shown at all the towns as made out for the sister of the Comtesse de Cernes, seemed to preclude the idea of peril to her companions. At Venice the mind of the comtesse was finally set at ease by the reappearance of the outriders, telling a funny unscrupulous sort of story about having fallen in on the road with a courier from Innsbruck, to whom they made themselves very agreeable, and whom they finally left hopelessly tipsy at an inn near Trent.

'It was very wrong of you, Messieurs,' said the escaped fugitive, 'to make him drink so much; you ought to have tied him up somewhere. But I thank you very much for all the dangers you incurred for my sake; and I assure all of you, my good friends, that your king and queen will never forget you.'

There were no telegrams in those days; but before a week was over, all Europe, or rather all political and fashionable Europe, was talking of the escape of the Princess Clementina Sobieski, grand-daughter of the hero who repulsed the hordes of Turkey on the plains before Vienna, from her captivity at the Castle of Innsbruck, where she and her mother had—for political reasons connected with Great Britain—been placed by her cousin, the Emperor Charles VI. of Germany. It was told with indignation at the courts of London and Vienna, with laughter and admiration at those of Rome, Paris, and Madrid, how she had been carried off by a party of dashing Irish people, calling themselves noble Flemish pilgrims;

and how she had left a French maid-servant in her place in the castle, and a letter to her mother apologising for her flight. The prime contriver of the adventure, it was said was that Chevalier Wogan who had been in mischief for some time past, and had made his own way with great aplomb out of Newgate.

At Venice, a singular readjustment of the dashing party took place: the vivacious outrider now appearing in the character of Captain Misset, the husband of Madame Misset, hitherto called the Comtesse de Cernes; and the tall outrider in that of Captain O'Toole, both being of the Franco-Irish regiment of Count Dillon, as was also the gallant Major Gaydon, *alias* the Comte de Cernes. The comtesse's brother was now no longer related to her, but acknowledged himself to be that Charles Wogan who had really done much for the Chevalier, having fought for him, been taken prisoner for him, escaped for him, chosen his bride, and effected her liberation as cleverly as he had effected his own. In fact the Italian postillion Vezzosi was the only one of this curious group who had acted at all *à propos* *à person*.

The 15th of May 1719 was a gala day in Rome, when a long string of coaches and the Prince—whom a large number of British subjects, expressing their loyalty by peculiar signs of approval, considered to be rightful king of Great Britain and Ireland—went out to conduct the fugitive young lady triumphantly into the Eternal City. She now no longer had need to use the passport which franked her as the sister of the Comtesse de Cernes, being openly and joyfully welcomed as the Princess Maria Clementina Sobieski.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

IN 1845 the late Professor Faraday delivered a lecture on the solidification of gases at the Royal Institution, and demonstrated his facts by experiments as interesting as they were successful. Under his skilful manipulation a tube filled with olefant gas, quite invisible, was seen to become partially filled with a colourless liquid, which was the gas in a condensed form. Two conditions were shewn to be essential to the result—extreme pressure, and extreme cold. The pressure was obtained by strong mechanical appliances, and the cold by means of solidified carbonic acid, which looked like lumps of snow. In this way the lecturer made clear to a general audience the process by which a number of gases had been brought into a liquid or solid form; and he stated that he had 'hoped to make oxygen the subject of the evening's experiment, but from some undetected cause it had baffled his attempts at solidification.' Nevertheless, he looked forward to the time when not only oxygen, but azote and hydrogen would be solidified, and he agreed with Dumas, of the Institute of France, that hydrogen would shew itself in the form of a metal.

Faraday's anticipation is now realised in one particular, for oxygen has been liquefied. This achievement is due to the enlightened and persevering efforts of Mr Pictet, an able physicist of

Geneva. Working with apparatus capable of resisting a pressure of eight hundred atmospheres, and a temperature sixty-five degrees below zero (centigrade), he succeeded in converting oxygen (invisible) into a visible liquid which spouted from the tube in which it had been inclosed for experiment. It is a feat which involves important consequences for science. It is a further confirmation of the mechanical theory of heat, according to which all gases are vapours capable of passing through the three states—solid, liquid, and gaseous. Geneva winds up the year with a fine scientific triumph. Will Albemarle Street supplement it by liquefying or solidifying azote and hydrogen? Just as these lines are going to press we hear a rumour that it has been done by a Frenchman at Paris.

Experiments have been made to measure the sound-impulse produced in a telephone by ordinary speaking; but it is too feeble to excite even a delicate galvanometer. But a slight swing of the free end of the instrument affects the needle, which moves in a different direction according as the swing is south, north, west, or east. There is no doubt, as we observed in a recent paper on the subject, that in the behaviour of the telephone and the phenomena of its currents scientific men have a promising subject of inquiry. Meanwhile, as explained at the end of this article, the notion that it would at once supersede other forms of telegraphy or telephony will abate. A telephone has no advantage over a speaking-tube within the distances where a tube is available. Moreover the needlessly high price at which it is to be sold will be an effectual bar to its general use. To ask thirty-five pounds and twenty-five pounds for an article that could be sold at a profit for so many shillings, is not and ought not to be the way to commercial success.

It is stated in a French scientific periodical that underground water may be discovered by observing the quivering of the air on a clear calm summer afternoon when the sun is low. If a well be dug at the spot where the quivering appears, a supply of water will, as is said, there be found. And as regards the influence of trees on moisture, careful observation has confirmed the theory that more rain falls on forests than on open plains; and comparing different kinds of trees it is found that the pine tribe get more water and retain more than leafy trees. Hence, it is said, pines are the best defence against sudden inundations, and the best means for giving freshness and humidity to a hot and dry climate such as that of Algeria, where attempts at amelioration have been made by planting, and by the digging of artesian wells.

Readers of this *Journal* will not be ignorant of the health-imparting properties of the Australian gum-tree, or eucalyptus, nor that the fir and pine possess similar properties, but in a minor degree, yet still sufficient to enhance the title to salubrity of certain watering-places. Mr Kingzett, an ingenious and persevering chemist, had tried for a long time to discover whether the active atmospheric element, ozone, was evolved from the

leaves of plants, and was forced to the conclusion that the element produced was not ozone, but peroxide of hydrogen. He then experimented on oils of different kinds, and found that they absorbed oxygen rapidly, and were thereby in some instances transformed into new substances. Among them all turpentine proved to be the best absorber; and it appeared on further experiment that while one portion became resinified, another portion was converted into peroxide of hydrogen and camphoric acid. The natural conclusion from this result was that the eucalyptus and the pine owe their salubrious properties to the presence of these two substances; or rather to the 'terpene,' or principle of turpentine, with which they are imbued. This point established, measures were taken to produce the sanitifying substances on a large scale; and now a company owning a manufactory in the east of London advertise that they are ready to supply the new disinfectant under the name of *Sanitas* in any quantity. It is not poisonous, will not stain the materials to which it may be applied, can be used as a wholesome scent, and is efficacious in preserving articles of food. The process of manufacture is ingenious, and is so combined that there is no waste of turpentine even in the form of vapour; but of the details we need not attempt an explanation here. Suffice it that *Sanitas*, with full description of its virtues, is now largely advertised in the public journals.

Professor Galloway, of the Royal College of Science, Dublin, has published a pamphlet in which he states that salted meat is unwholesome, and produces scurvy, because by the process of salting the meat is deprived of important constituents, notably phosphate of potash. He says that if this salt were eaten with the beef served out on board ship, the meat would be nutritious, would not occasion scurvy; and he calls on the Admiralty to test his view by actual experiment.

What a convenience it would be if all the street lamps of a town could be lighted and put out at once! Mr Lane Fox has proved at a commercial station in the neighbourhood of Fulham that it can be done. All the lamps are connected by wires overhead or underground; to each burner is fitted an electro-magnet composed of a coil of wire round a soft iron core, and above it hangs a movable magnet. The ends of the connecting wires are attached to or detached from a battery at pleasure. When the gas is to be lighted, a current is sent through the wires; the electro-magnet on each burner is excited; the movable magnet swings round, and turns on the gas; a current from a powerful coil is then sent through the wires, and produces a spark at each burner, and thereby lights the gas. The putting out is effected by a reverse current. From twenty to forty lamps have been thus treated, and with entire success; and it is thought that three hundred might be included in the circuit with a like satisfactory result.

Thus in order to light up London or any other large town, the lamps would have to be divided into groups of three hundred. The lamplighter, or man in charge of the battery, would of course require to know that none had been missed, and this could be made certain by placing the first and last lamp of the group within sight of his station. If they are alight, then all are alight. The practicability of the operation appears therefore to be

settled. The next question is—Will it prove a saving to the ratepayers?

Complaints that ordinary gas-light is not so brilliant as it ought to be, are often heard, and not without reason. The Pure Carbon Gas Company claim for their gas that it is not open to the objections urged against other gas. The process of manufacture has the merit of being very simple, and free from the usual noxious results. At a demonstration made a few weeks since, proof was given that but little space and little skill are required in the manufacture. The tar formed during the process, instead of being carried away as at present, is passed back into the retorts, whereby, as is said, three thousand feet more of gas can be produced from a ton of coal than by the ordinary process. An arrangement is introduced which separates the ammonia and the sulphur, and in consequence this pure carbon gas has but little smell. Ordinary gas is passed as good if it contains not more than twenty-five grains of sulphur to the hundred feet: the quantity in the new gas is less than three grains. We are told that the cost of manufacture is not more than eighteenth of the thousand cubic feet; that it does not require skilled labour, that in consequence of its freedom from smell it could be carried on in a ship or in a house, while its simplicity renders it applicable to villages where at present there are no public lights. The Collinge Engineering Works, Westminster Bridge Road, are mentioned as the place where the demonstration above described was given.

With a view to account for the presence of mineral oil underground in certain parts of Europe and in Pennsylvania, some ingenious persons have assumed that the oil is a decomposition-product of long-buried organic remains. But the answer to this is that the oil is found in very old strata 'where but few organic remains can have existed.' Mr D. Mendelejeff, a foreign chemist, having visited the Pennsylvania wells, puts forward his opinion on this interesting question: The substance of the earth having been condensed from vapour, 'the interior of the earth must consist largely of metals (iron predominating) in combination with carbon. Wherever fissures have been produced in the earth's crust by volcanic action, the water, which of necessity made its way into the interior, and thus came into contact with metallic carbides at high temperatures and pressures, must have given rise to saturated hydrocarbons, which have ascended in the form of vapour to strata where they condensed, and thus formed the oil.'

Captain Calver, R.N., has by command of the Admiralty surveyed the Thames below Woolwich to ascertain whether the discharge of the sewage of London into the river has created obstructions in the channel. The captain has published his report, and a very discouraging report it is, for it makes known that shoals have formed, and are forming, which in course of time will completely stop the navigation of the river. In this we have a proof that it is a mistake to send the solid portion of sewage into a stream, in the hope that it will be effectually carried away by the tide. It is not carried away; but is deposited at the bends, and in the eddies, with detriment to health as well as to the water-way.

Engineers who contend that none but neutralised

liquid sewage should pass into a river are manifestly in the right. To discharge the solids is a waste as well as a mischief; and if it goes on, the whole of the land will some day be utterly starved for want of nitrogen. Some theorists argue that it won't pay to attempt to convert the solids into a fertilising material. The answer to this is the experience gained at Aylesbury, where the solid part of the town sewage is separated from the liquid by precipitation; is converted into a fertiliser, part of which is used on the town-farm, and the surplus, in the form of a dry, scentless powder, is sold at three pounds ten shillings the ton. A single grain of oats, sown on land treated with this powder, produced seven thousand grains from one root, and other grains yielded varying numbers down to two thousand. The powder on analysis seems poor; but its richness of productive power may be judged of from the foregoing statement.

A new process for making sulphate of soda has been invented by M. Fournier, a Frenchman. It leaves behind as waste liquid a large quantity of a certain chloride, which turns out to be excellent for the precipitation of sewage. Hence it appears that nature and science combine to shew how the fertility of the land and the free channels of rivers may alike be maintained. The process has been patented in this country, and if all go well we may hope, in time, to hear that the sewage of London, instead of filling up the bed of the Thames, is increasing the fruitfulness of fields, gardens, and meadows in Essex and Kent.

Meteorologists, in their review of the weather, inform us that in the gale on the 11th of November last, the barometer was lower the wind stronger, and the rainfall greater, than on any other day in the year. The mean velocity of the wind was thirty-eight miles an hour; and the rainfall in twenty-four hours amounted to a little more than an inch and a half. The fall for the whole month was in Sussex, eight and a quarter inches; in Cumberland, nine and three-quarter inches; being, as regards the Sussex gauge, more than five inches above the average of the previous ten years. The total rainfall in eleven months, January to November, was thirty-three and one-third inches: a remarkable excess over twenty-eight inches, which is the usual average for the whole year. For those who are curious in comparisons we take a fact from the weather-records of New South Wales: at Newcastle in that colony there fell on March 18, 1871, more than ten and a half inches of rain in two hours and a half.

Two official papers published in India further discuss the question—sun-spots and rainfall. 'The Cycle of Drought and Famine in Southern India' contains a statement of the argument by Dr W. W. Hunter, and the conclusions to which he has arrived. These are: 'That although no uniform numerical relation can be detected between the relative number of sun-spots and the actual amount of rainfall, yet that the minimum period in the cycle of sun-spots is a period of regularly recurring and strongly marked drought in Southern India.—That apart from any solar theory, an examination of the rain registers shews that a period of deficient rainfall recurs in cycles of eleven years at Madras . . . that the statistical evidence shews that the cycle of rainfall at Madras has a marked coincidence with a corresponding cycle of sun-spots . . . and that the evidence tends also to

shew that the average rainfall of the years of minimum rainfall in the said cycle approaches perilously near to the point of deficiency which causes famine.' The average is, however, above that point; and though droughts and famines may recur in the cyclic years of minimum rainfall, the evidence, in Dr Hunter's opinion, is insufficient to warrant the prediction of a regularly recurring famine.

The observations on which these conclusions are founded include sixty-four years of the present century: too short a period on which to build a theory; but as no records exist earlier than 1810, it is by future observation only that the conclusions can be tested. Meanwhile meteorological observers will be watchful, especially of the rainfall, for India is a country which affords singularly favourable opportunities for a comprehensive system of observations.

The other paper referred to above is by Mr H. F. Blanford, Meteorological Reporter to the government of India. He points out that Dr Hunter's views apply exclusively to Southern India, and that in Northern India famines are most frequent at the epochs of most sun-spots. This lack of agreement between two competent authorities shews how great is the need for a lengthened series of observations.

In the recent Arctic Expedition twenty-five species of fossil plants were discovered in Grinnell Land by Captain Feilden. They are of the period described by geologists as Miocene, and can be identified with species of the same period found in Europe, in North-western America, and in Asia. Among them are two kinds of *Equisetum*, poplar, birch, elm, and pine. It was suggested at a meeting of the Geological Society that the bed of lignite in which these remains were met with was in remote ages a large peat-moss, probably containing a lake in which the water-lilies grew, while on its muddy shores the large reeds and sedges and birches and poplars flourished. The drier spots and neighbouring chains of hills were probably occupied by the pines and firs, associated with elm and hazel. Among all these which indicate a primeval forest, the only sign of animal life discovered was a solitary wing-case of a beetle.

When water-lilies were growing in that now desolate region, fresh-water must have filled the ponds and lakes. Captain Feilden's discovery may be taken as additional evidence of a change of climate, which the paleontologists and physicists who are now discussing that interesting question will not fail to make use of on fitting occasion.

A few years ago the British Association appointed a committee of eminent mathematicians to consider 'the possibility of improving the methods of instruction in elementary geometry.' The Report of this committee was published in the stout volume which contains the account of the meeting held at Glasgow. It states that the main practical difficulty in effecting the improvement is 'that of reconciling the claims of the teacher to greater freedom with the necessity of one fixed and definite standard for examination purposes; that 'no text-book yet produced is fit to succeed Euclid in the position of authority, and that a syllabus of propositions in a definite sequence to be regarded as a standard sequence for examination purposes, might be published. Such a syllabus as is here implied has been brought out

by the Association for the improvement of geometrical teaching; and the committee recommend it for adoption by the universities and other great examining bodies of the United Kingdom. 'It may be well to observe,' they say in their Report, 'that the adoption of this or some such standard syllabus would not necessitate the abandonment of the Elements of Euclid as a text-book by such teachers as still preferred it to any other, as it would, at the utmost involve only such supplementary teaching as is contained in the notes appended to many of the editions of Euclid now in use; while it would greatly relieve that large and increasing body of teachers who demand greater freedom in the treatment of geometry than under existing conditions they can venture to adopt.'

Supplementary to our recent notices of the telephone, the following remarks, translated from a late number of the *Telegraph Bulletin* of the Ottoman Administration, and dealing with a question of some importance to telegraph manipulators throughout the world, may be read with interest:

'Is the telephone, yes or no, destined to replace other telegraph instruments; and seeing the possibility that people may use it without special training, is it in the end destined to destroy the career of telegraph employes? Those questions merit from us the labour of being examined with care. We think that that instrument will never be able to be employed in telegraphic working destined to serve governments and the public. In effect, supposing the instrument perfect, arrived at the last limits of perfection, and able to work at all distances with or without relays, then—1. To transmit a message with all the advantages offered by the system, it would be necessary that the sender should be able to speak himself directly with the receiver, without the intervention of an employe. Now, all those who know the organisation of the lines know that this is not possible, that there must necessarily be intermediary offices of deposit, that the public cannot be admitted to the offices where messages are transmitted or received, and consequently the sender must give his message written. 2. An employe once charged with the message, the instrument has already lost one of its principal advantages, for that employe must read the message, and pronounce it to his correspondent; but if the message is written in a foreign language, the impracticability is evident. Lastly, the telegraph administrations now possess instruments which permit them to send messages with much greater speed than can be attained in sending them by the voice. Those reasons alone, and there are many others, ought then to assure the employes that this new invention will not put in peril their means of existence.

'This is not to say that the telephone will not be utilised. On the contrary, it will probably be much used, but in special cases and for private use. For example: To put any chief in immediate relation with his employes in offices or manufactories for the police of towns for announcing fires; for service of mines; to replace with advantage electric bells in many cases; and in a crowd of circumstances not yet foreseen. Let us wish then good success to this invention, which does honour to the era of steam and electricity.'

THE INTELLIGENT MOUSE.

THE following account of extraordinary sagacity on the part of a mouse has been sent to us by a contributor, who vouches for the truth of the statement: 'At my house, in a trap for catching mice alive, which had been overlooked for some weeks, was found the nest of a mouse with several young, all alive with their mother; and some other mice which had died of starvation. The only explanation, I think, which can be given of so strange an occurrence is that the male mouse, knowing by instinct the condition of his mate, provided for her wants by bringing to her the materials for her nest, which she pulled in through close wires, and supplied her with food, while he allowed all the others—the non-related captives—to starve to death. It seems almost more than instinct that the male mouse should not have entered the trap, where there was such attraction for him, as though he knew that on his liberty depended the lives of the mother and her offspring.'

The writer has also favoured us with the following lines, which he entitles

THE AFFECTION OF MICE.

Assist me, my Muse, while in verse I would tell
A tale, true as strange, and so mournful as well.
No words can depict it; all feeble my lays;
Such tender devotion strikes one with amazement.
In a trap which was set to catch mice in my house,
I had the misfortune to capture a mouse;
That mouse was a female, and she was with young;
Yet not hers, but her consort's, the praise must be sung.
He knowing her state—that she'd soon have a brood,
And would need a warm nest, and must die without food—
Searched all through the house to find stuff for her bed,
And supplied as he could, the food on which she fed.
The straw, hair, and feathers to meet her desires
He brought to the trap, and she pulled through the wires.
Her couch being formed, soon the offspring appeared—
A numerous progeny, there to be reared;
While around her on every side there did lie
The bodies of those that of hunger did die—
And had long been dead, any person could tell
Who had eyes that would see, or a nose that could smell.

He only took care to provide for that *one*
By affection and instinct he knew was his own.
What wisdom was his! With attraction so strong,
He knew, if the life of his mate he'd prolong,
He must keep himself clear, and have full liberty;
That to enter the trap was for both them to die
That the trap was neglected for months is quite clear,
From what it contained—what an odour was there!
'Tis pity I had not the power to save
The creatures, who all found a watery grave.
The servant—my house from such pests to deliver—
Remorselessly cast them all into the river.

MORAL.

Unnatural husbands, with minds to discern,
A momentous lesson from mice you may learn,
Which have only instinct their actions to guide;
Be kind to your wives—for your children provide.

J. H. DAVIS.

13 Conyngham Road, Dublin.
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Price 1½d.

MISS STIRLING GRAHAM.

FIFTY years ago, or thereabouts, when by good fortune my brother and I were permitted to make some advance towards an acquaintance with the luminaries which at that time in a remarkable manner distinguished society in the Scottish capital, we one evening, at the house of John Archibald Murray—afterwards Lord Murray—enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing a lady who some years previously had become locally famous. She was a lively pleasant person, rather small in figure, unmarried, and had seemingly reached middle age. From her manners she evidently moved among people in the higher circles. As to her language there was the marked peculiarity that, besides a Scottish intonation, there was a pretty frequent use of the Scottish dialect—that which is best exemplified in Burns; for as yet there were still a few northern ladies of rank who in conversation did not disdain to employ incidentally words in the national vernacular. They spoke as they had been taught in early life, and as they were accustomed to speak among old and familiar friends. There was nothing coarse or vulgar in their language; the Scotch words gave an agreeable flavouring to their discourse. Lady Anne Lindsay, the writer of *Auld Robin Gray*, was a good specimen of this lingering class of high-born ladies, who understood and still occasionally used a Scotch seasoning in their conversation. Lord Cockburn has presented some charming reminiscences of this class of ladies, and he wrote just at the time when they had very nearly died out.

The lady who interested us on the present occasion was Miss Stirling Graham of Duntrune. As we understood, she lived mostly at the family estate in Forfarshire, with a mansion overlooking the estuary of the Tay, and commanding a distant view of St Andrews. Usually she spent her winters in Edinburgh, where she was immensely esteemed for her geniality and accomplishments. My brother, who had already written much about the disastrous troubles in Scotland in the seven-

teenth century, felt a peculiar interest in Miss Stirling Graham, on account of her connection by heritage with that historical personage, John Graham of Claverhouse—the terrible Claverhouse described by Scott in *Old Mortality*, for his persecution of the Covenanters, and who as Viscount Dundee perished by a musket-shot at the battle of Killiecrankie, 1689. Claverhouse was a Forfarshire man. Leaving no immediate heirs, his estates devolved on a cousin, David Graham of Duntrune; this person was succeeded by his last surviving son, on whose demise the property was inherited equally by his four sisters; one of these sisters was the mother of Clementina Stirling Graham, the lady to whose memory we have devoted the present paper.

Moving about at evening parties among the literati and the more eminent lawyers, Miss Stirling Graham, by her original humour and tact, may be said to have kept the town in a pleasant kind of buzz. Nature seemed to have designed her to be an actress. She possessed the power of simulation to a degree almost unexampled; also the powers of an improvisatrice which have been very rarely excelled. Her wit and her personations, however, were always exclusively employed to promote harmless mirth among her select acquaintances, and we know she would have shrunk from anything like a public exhibition. She was great in personifying and mimicking old Scottish ladies, or indeed Scottish women in the humbler ranks of life, for which her acute observation of character and her knowledge of the vernacular tongue particularly qualified her. Her deceptions were numerous, but all of an innocent kind. In her latter days, at the solicitation of friends, she gave an account of her principal personations, which was printed for private distribution, under the title of *Mystifications*. The book being much sought after in this country and America, the authoress was prevailed on to let it be published in the usual way (Edmonston and Douglas), 1865; yet, we doubt, after all, if this handsome volume, which was edited by Dr John Brown, is so well known as it should be, and we

propose to give one or two alluring specimens of the contents.

The first Mystification in the book is that which signalled Miss Stirling Graham's success in deceiving Mr Jeffrey, the eminent practising lawyer, and at the same time editor of the *Edinburgh Review*. Jeffrey had been introduced to the lady, and had heard of her cleverness in personation. Meeting her afterwards at the theatre, he said he should like to see her *take in* some one. A promise was given that he should have that pleasure very soon. Likely enough, the busy advocate thought nothing more of the matter. On the second evening afterwards, accompanied by Miss Helen Carnegie of Craigo as her daughter, Miss Stirling Graham, who at the time had been on a visit to Lord Gillies, stopped at Mr Jeffrey's door, 92 George Street, between five and six o'clock, when she knew Mr Jeffrey was at home and preparing for dinner. The two ladies were ushered into the parlour appropriated for visitors. What follows we copy in a somewhat condensed form from the account in *Mystifications*.

"There was a blazing fire, and wax-lights on the table; he [Jeffrey] had laid down his book, and seemed to be in the act of joining the ladies in the drawing-room before dinner. The Lady Pitlival was announced, and he stepped forward a few paces to receive her. She was a sedate-looking little woman of an inquisitive law-loving countenance; a mouth in which [by an adroit management of the lips] not a vestige of a tooth was to be seen, and a pair of old-fashioned spectacles on her nose. . . . She was dressed in an Irish poplin of silver gray, a white Cashmere shawl, a mob-cap with a band of thin muslin that fastened it below the chin, and a small black silk bonnet that shaded her eyes from any glare of light. Her right hand was supported by an antique gold-headed cane, and she leant with the other on the arm of her daughter.

"Mr Jeffrey bowed, and handed the old lady to a *chaîse longue* on one side of the fire, and sat himself down opposite to her on the other. But in his desire to accommodate the old lady, and in his anxiety to be informed of the purport of the visit, he forgot what was due to the young one, and the heiress of the ancient House of Pitlival was left standing in the middle of the floor. She helped herself to a chair, however, and sat down beside her mother. She had been educated in somewhat of the severity of the old school, and during the whole of the consultation she neither spoke nor moved a single muscle of her countenance.

"*Well!*" said Mr Jeffrey as he looked at the old lady, in expectation that she would open the subject that had procured him the honour of the visit.

"*Weel,*" replied her Ladyship, "I am come to tak' a word o' the law frae you.

"My husband, the late Ogilvy of Pitlival, among other property which he left to me, was a house and a yard at the town-end of Kirriemuir, also a kiln and a malt-barn.

"The kiln and the barn were rented by a man they ca'd John Playfair, and John Playfair sublet them to another man they ca'd Willy Cruickshank, and Willy Cruickshank purchased a cargo of

damaged lint, and ye widna hinder Willy to dry the lint upon the kiln, and the lint took low and kindled the cupples, and the slates flew aff, and a' the flooring was brunt to the ground, and naething left standin' but the bare wa's.

"Now it wasna insured, and I want to ken wha's to pay the damage, for John Playfair says he has naething *ado wi' it*, and Willy Cruickshank says he has naething to *do it wi'*, and I am determined no to take it off their hand the way it is."

"Has it been in any of the Courts?"

"Ou ay; it has been in the Sherra Court of Forfar; and Sherra Duff was a gude man, and he kent me, and would ha' gien't in my favour, but that clattering creature Jamie L'Amy cam' in, and he gave it against me."

"I have no doubt Mr L'Amy would give a very fair decision."

"It wasna a fair decision when he gae it against me."

"That is what many people think in your circumstances."

"The minister of Blairgowrie is but a fule body, and advised me no to gae to the law."

"I think he gave you a very sensible advice."

"It was anything but that; and mind, if you dinna gie' in my favour, I'll no be sair pleased."

"Mr Jeffrey smiled, and said he would not promise to do that, and then inquired if she had any papers.

"Ou ay, I have a great bundle of papers, and I'll come back at any hour you please to appoint, and bring them wi' me."

"It will not be necessary for you to return yourself; you can send them to me."

"And wha would you recommend to me for an agent in the business?"

"That I cannot tell; it is not my province to recommend an agent."

"Then how will Robert Smith of Balharrie do?"

"Very well; very good man indeed; and you may bid him send me the papers."

"Meantime her Ladyship drew from her pocket a large old-fashioned leather pocket-book with silver clasps, out of which she presented him a letter directed to himself. He did not look into it, but threw it carelessly on the table. She now offered him a pinch of snuff from a massive gold box, and then selected another folded paper from the pocket-book, which she presented to him, saying: "Here is a prophecy that I would like you to look at and explain to me."

"He begged to be excused, saying: "I believe your Ladyship will find me more skilled in the law than the prophets."

"She entreated him to look at it; and on glancing his eyes over it, he remarked, "that from the words *Tory* and *Whig*, it did not seem to be a very ancient prophecy."

"Maybe," replied her Ladyship; "but it has been long in our family. I copied these lines out of a muckle book entitled the *Prophecies of Pitlival*, just before I came to you, in order to have your opinion on some of the obscure passages of it. And you will do me a great favour if you will read it out loud, and I will tell you what I think of it as you go on."

"Here, then, with a smile at the oddity of the request, and a mixture of impatience in his manner, he read the following lines, while she

interrupted him occasionally to remark upon their meaning :

When the crown and the head shall disgrace ane anither,
And the Bishops on the Bench shall gae a' wrang
together ;

When Tory or Whig,
Fills the judge's wig ;
When the Link o' the Miln
Shall reek on the kiln,
O'er the Light of the North,
When the Glamour breaks forth,
And its wild-fire so red
With the daylight is spread ;

When woman shrinks not from the ordeal of trial,
There is triumph and fame to the House of Pitlail.

"We ha'e seen the crown and the head," she said, "disgrace ane anither no very lang syne, and ye may judge whether the bishops gae right or wrang on that occasion; and the *Tory* and *Whig* may no be very ancient, and yet never be the less true. Then there is the Link o' the Miln—we have witnessed that come to pass; but what the 'Light of the North' can mean, and the 'Glamour,' I canna mak' out. The twa hindmost lines seem to me to point at Queen Caroline; and if it had pleased God to spare my son, I might have guessed he would have made a figure on her trial, and have brought 'Triumph and fame to the House of Pitlail.' I begin, however, to think that the prophesie may be fulfilled in the person of my daughter, for which reason I have brought her to Edinburgh to see and get a gude match for her."

"Here Mr Jeffrey put on a smile, half serious half quizzical, and said: "I suppose it would not be necessary for the gentleman to change his name."

"It would be weel worth his while, sir; she has a very gude estate, and she's a very bonny lassie, and she's equally related baith to Airlie and Strathmore; and a'bodie in our part of the world ca's her the Rosebud of Pitlail."

Mr Jeffrey smiled as his eyes met the glance of the beautiful flower that was so happily placed before him; but the Rosebud herself returned no sign of intelligence.

"A pause in the conversation now ensued, which was interrupted by her Ladyship asking Mr Jeffrey to tell her where she could procure a set of *fause teeth*."

"Of what?" said he, with an expression of astonishment, while the whole frame of the young lady shook with some internal emotion.

"A set of *fause teeth*," she repeated; and was again echoed by the interrogation, "What?"

"A third time she asked the question, and in a more audible key; when he replied, with a kind of suppressed laugh: "There is Mr Nasmyth, north corner of St Andrew Square, a very good dentist; and there is Mr Hutchins, corner of Hanover and George Street."

"She requested he would give her their names on a slip of paper. He rose and walked to the table, wrote down both the directions, which he folded and presented to her.

"She now rose to take leave. The bell was rung, and when the servant entered, his master desired him to see if the Lady Pitlail's carriage was at the door.

"He returned to tell there was no carriage wait-

ing, on which her Ladyship remarked: "This comes of *fore-hand payments*—they make *hind-hand work*. I gae a hackney-coachman twa shillings to bring me here, and he's awa' without me."

"There was not a coach within sight, and another had to be sent for from a distant stand of coaches. It was by this time past the hour of dinner, and there seemed no hope of being rid of his visitors.

"Her Ladyship said she was in no hurry, as they had had tea, and were going to the play, and hoped he would accompany them. He said he had not yet had his dinner.

"What is the play to-night?" said she.

"It is the *Heart of Midlothian* again, I believe."

"They then talked of the merits of the actors, and she took occasion to tell him that she patronised the *Edinburgh Review*."

"We read your buke, sir!"

"I am certainly very much obliged to you."

"Still no carriage was heard. Another silence ensued, until it bethought her Ladyship to amuse him with the politics of the country.

"Here the coach was announced, and by the help of her daughter's arm and her gold-headed cane, she began to move, complaining loudly of a *corny toe*. She was with difficulty got into the coach. The Rosebud stepped lightly after her.

"The door was closed, and the order given to drive to Gibb's Hotel, whence they hastened with all speed to Lord Gillies's, where the party waited dinner for them, and hailed the fulfilment of the "Prophecie of Pitlail."

"Mr Jeffrey, in the meantime, impatient for his dinner, joined the ladies in the drawing-room.

"What in the world has detained you?" said Mrs Jeffrey.

"One of the most tiresome and oddest old women I ever met with. I thought never to have got rid of her;" and beginning to relate some of the conversation that had taken place, it flashed upon him at once that he had been *taken in*.

"He ran down-stairs for the letter, hoping it would throw some light upon the subject, but it was only a blank sheet of paper, containing a fee of three guineas."

"They amused themselves with the relation; but it was not until the day after that he found out who the ladies really were. He laughed heartily, and promised to aid them in any other scene they liked to devise. He returned the fee with an amusing characteristic letter, in which he concluded with best wishes for the cure of her Ladyship's corns.

With similar dexterity, this marvellously clever lady figures on nearly a dozen different occasions in town and country, sometimes in one guise and sometimes in another, mystifying even the most incredulous by her manoeuvres.

About the best Mystification recorded is that in which as a daughter of a poor man, Sandy Reid in the Canongate, the lady imposed on Sir William Fettes, who had been Lord Provost in Edinburgh, and left a fortune to endow a college which is now in successful operation. We let Miss Stirling Graham relate the adventure.

"I once got half-a-crown from Sir William Fettes when he was dining with a few friends at his sister, Mrs Bruce's. She and Lady Fettes put it into my head to ask charity from him, in the character of a daughter of an old companion of his,

whose name was Sandy Reid. And whether Sandy Reid ever had a daughter was nothing to the purpose. Sir William had lost sight of the man, and I had no previous knowledge that ever such a person was in existence. Dressed in a smart bonnet and shawl belonging to Lord Gillies's housekeeper, I boldly rang the door-bell, and demanded of the servant if I could get a word of Sir William.

"On the message being carried up-stairs, the ladies desired that the person who wished to speak with Sir William might be shewn into Mrs Bruce's dressing-room, where behind the window-curtains were stationed a merry party of some half-a-dozen listeners.

"Enter Sir William. "Well, my good woman, what is your business with me?" "To ask your help, sir, in behalf of the widow and the fatherless." "And pray who are you?"

"I am the daughter of ane Sandy Reid, who was weel kenned to your honour; his father lived next door to your father in the Canongate." "Ay, are you the daughter of Sandy Reid?"

"I am proud to say sae." "And what has reduced you to this plight, my good woman?" "Just an ill marriage, Sir William." "I am sorry for that; but you say you are a widow." "I am; no just a widow; but my husband has run aff wi' another woman." "That is very unfortunate; but what is your husband?" "A soldier, sir."

"An officer of the soldiers you mean, I suppose?"

"Na, na, Sir William; he is but a single soldier." "And did Sandy Reid's daughter marry a single soldier?" (Weeping)—"It is o'er true, Sir William; but he was a bonny man, and I ne'er thought he would forsake me." "And did your father consent to your marrying a single soldier?" "Oh, no, Sir William; but it was ordained."

"Have you any family, or any means of living?" "I have five boys; and I wash and iron, and do all I can to get bread to them." "Where do you live?"

"In Elder Street." "In Elder Street! that seems to me rather an expensive part of the town for a person in your circumstances."

"It is but a garret, sir, up four pair of stairs."

"Are any of your children at school?" "No, sir; but the eldest is in Provost Manderson's [drug] shop, who has been very kind to him, and ta'en him aff my hand. And the second is a prentice to a tobacconist; and (here weeping bitterly) the rest are in the house, for I have neither decent claes to put upon them, nor siller to send them to the schule; and this is Saturday night, and no sae muckle meat within the door as put by the Sabbath day."

"I am sorry for you, and grieved to see Sandy Reid's daughter come to this; but you must be sensible, that for a person in your situation, your present dress is rather too showy and extravagant." "That's true, Sir William; but gentle servants are no' civil to poor folk when they come ill-dressed."

"I believe, indeed, that is too true, but your dress is quite unsuitable." "Indeed, Sir William, I borrowed this bonnet and shawl from a gentleman's housekeeper, just for the purpose of waiting upon you, for I am in great want."

"Well, there is half-a-crown to help you in the meantime; and I will inquire at Provost Manderson about you on Monday, and if you be speaking

the truth, I will see and get your children into some of the Hospitals."

"Here the party broke out from behind the curtains"—and we may suppose that Sir William was a good deal amazed as well as amused at the adroit way he had been taken in.

Miss Stirling Graham long outlived the early friends whom she delighted with her personations; but drawing out existence to an advanced age, she still surrounded herself with an agreeable society, and was loved by all whom she honoured with her acquaintance. She was a great reader, and possessed good literary abilities, as is observable by her *Mystifications*, and by the anecdotes which conclude the volume, also by the following lines, addressed to those 'Shadows of the Past' whom she held in remembrance:

Blessed shades of the past,
In the future I see ye, so fair!
Ties that were nearest,
Forms that were dearest,
The truest and fondest are there.

They are flowerets of earth,
That are blooming in heaven, so fair:
And the stately tree,
Spreading wide and free,
The shaves that were ripened are there.

The tear-drop that trembled
In Pity's meek eye; and the prayer,
Faith of the purest,
Hope that was surest,
The love all-enduring are there.

And the loved, the beloved,
Whose life made existence so fair!
The soft seraph voice
Bade the lowly rejoice,
Is heard in sweet harmony there.

This gifted and venerable lady died at her mansion at Duntrune on the 23d August 1877, at the extreme age of ninety-five. Perhaps, the present paper may help to make her *Mystifications* more extensively known than hitherto; this object, however, might be better served by a cheap and popular edition of the work, amplified by explanatory notes. The book, enriched by the tasteful preface of Dr John Brown, is a gem which ought not to drop out of notice. W. C.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER VII.—A NEW FACE AT CARBERY.

"SHE be coming for sure. Carriage, with second coachman, just getting ready for a start to Dundleton, to meet the down train at 9.17," said a pink-faced youth, whose stature and chest measurement would have procured for him the interested admiration of a sergeant-major in Her Majesty's Brigade of Guards, but who was as yet but imperfect in his domestic drill as third footman at Carbery Chase.

"What's 9.17?" demanded the mature female addressed, with some asperity, as she dredged flour over some cunningly compounded mess simmering beside the fire in the back-kitchen. "Can't you give a body the time o' the day? They didn't cut it so fine when I was your age, young chap!"

And indeed it is marvellous to note how the junior population throughout Western Christendom

appears to have learned to think and speak by railway time, and to have been, as it were, inoculated by Bradshaw.

'Thought you knewed all that 'n, cook! ' half-sulkily, half-apologetically rejoined the gigantic hobbledelohy, mindful of that functionary's empire over the roasts, subject of course to the high fiat of Monsieur Cornichon, the white-capped and black-bearded chef.

'Anyhow, this Miss Whatshername 'I'll be here soon after eleven.'

'Willis is her name, and she comes from the Ingees,' put in a tart young town-made housemaid. 'I wonder if she's black?' This quasi-witticism provoked a titter among the rest of the under-servants there collected; for anything was welcome that could excuse a laugh; and besides, a new recruit to the aristocracy of the waited-upon is sure to be smartly criticised by the plebs of those who wait.

'I wonder,' said the old sub-cook, stirring her saucepan, 'if she'll be setting her cap at young Mr Jasper?'

'The captain knows too well on which side his bread is buttered,' pronounced the gaunt housemaid-in-chief, an invaluable female, lynx-eyed for spiders' webs, and vigilant as to the minutest details of bedroom duty.

Opinions at Carbery Chase were very much divided as to the new-comer's exact status and claims to consideration. There were those who invidiously described her as 'Sir Sykes's charity child,' and appeared to regard her as a species of genteel mendicant most foolishly invited down to Devonshire. There were others who were not sorry for the arrival of any one considered capable of lending animation to a house where the regular routine of every-day life ran on with somewhat sluggish flow. And there were a few philosophers in plush or white aprons, much flouted by the rest, who held that Sir Sykes was himself the best judge as to what guests, permanent or temporary, should be allowed to share the shelter of his roof at Carbery.

That there was enough and to spare in that opulent mansion which acknowledged Sir Sykes Denzil for its master, was patent to all. Large as was Sir Sykes's household and handsome his expenditure (for how many baronets chronicled in the gilt-edged volumes of Messrs Dod and Debrete, can afford themselves the luxury of a third and fourth footman, a French chef like high-salaried M. Cornichon, and a groom of the chambers?), he was known to live within his income; and was rumoured by his inferiors to be guilty of the offence, never mentioned otherwise than with a resentful reverence, of 'putting by.' Sir Sykes's men and maids were probably not students of Dean Swift's ironical advice to their order; but we may rely on it that the servants of Dives himself had strongly defined ideas as to the proportion of high feasting that should accompany the purple and fine linen of their patron.

Meanwhile, in spite of the early training which is supposed to make an Englishman of Sir Sykes Denzil's degree as outwardly impassive as a Red Indian, no one at Carbery appeared to think so much about the arrival of Miss Willis as did the baronet himself. Her coming did not now at anyrate partake of the character of a surprise, for weeks had naturally elapsed between the incoming of the late and that of the new mail, and there had been time enough for preparations, if such were necessary. Sir Sykes, however, on the morning of his ward's arrival could not avoid, not merely the being nervous and anxious, but the exhibiting to all who cared to look of his inexplicable nervousness and unreasonable anxiety. He went and came at frequent and irregular intervals between his own traditional apartment the library, and that morning-room where his daughters usually sat over their sketches and lacework and china-painting, and all those laborious trifles on which young ladies employ their taper fingers.

That their father was undignified in his apparently uncalled-for agitation as to the Indian orphan's arrival, was too evident not to be recognised by even the most dutiful of daughters. But both Blanche and Lucy willingly accounted for the baronet's restlessness on the ground of the revival of early associations, acting on the nerves of one whose health was no longer robust.

'Let her only come here and quietly drop into her place among us,' said the elder sister to the younger; 'and depend upon it, papa will find her presence at Carbery as unexciting as though she were a supplementary daughter returning "for good," as the girls call it, from a boarding-school.'

Jasper could, had it so pleased him, have considerably enlightened the ignorance of his unsuspecting sisters. But the captain prudently said nothing, and did not ostensibly keep watch upon his father's actions, or deviate much from his own habit of indolently hanging about the stables, the kennels wherein sleek pointers and shaggy retrievers howled and rattled their chains, the billiard-room, and other resorts of ingenuous youth. The baronet's nervousness was not in itself surprising to him, in whose memory was fresh the conversation which he had overheard while lurking in the mean garden of *The Traveller's Rest*; but he could only conjecture what might be the hidden springs that prompted a course of conduct difficult to reconcile with a clean conscience and a secure worldly position.

'I never,' said Jasper to himself musingly, as he knocked about the balls on the billiard-table, 'heard a word against the governor. He was awfully needy and that sort of thing once, of course; but I never knew there to be a whisper of any sharp practice either at *écarté* or with the bones. Had there been such, some good-natured fellow or other about the clubs would have let fall a hint of it before now in my hearing, or some servant would have tattled, when I wore a jacket and was Master Jasper. He's not much

liked, my father, but respected he is. I doubt if many, who fluked by a lucky chance upon a great fortune, get so civilly spoken of behind their backs.

Jasper was not one to have cherished those tender recollections of infantine joys and sorrows, which with some men remain green and fresh to the last. He had, to use his own expression, to 'hark back' with painful effort and purpose, ere he could reproduce before his mental vision the long past of his early boyhood. 'I have a vague notion,' said he, after an interval of this appeal to memory, 'that my mother gave me more sweet-meats than were good for me, and that she, and I too, seemed to stand in awe of my father. I'm sure I don't know why, unless it were because he was serious and silent—a grave Spanish Don, as I used to think. But she said too that he had been of a livelier mood once, and something about his high spirits having deserted him just when the world began to smile. My old nurse—what was her name, I wonder?—Wiggins, Priggins—all nurses are named something of the sort, and all combine to dote over the little wretches that torment them—used to talk about the governor's sad looks dating from the loss of that young sister of mine. She would have been younger than Lucy, older than Blanche, I take it. But why, in the name of common-sense, a man of the world should never forget the loss of a chit in the nursery—that is, if it was all on the square—but then, again, the motive! And the captain's arching eyebrows and the compression of his thin lips were very expressive of his readiness to believe the very worst that could be believed as to his nearest and dearest, if only a plausible reason for such villainy could be alleged. 'If it had been myself now,' he muttered, as he sent the red ball, with a mechanical precision that proved him a dexterous pool-player, into pocket after pocket of the green table; 'but even then the governor, who had Apollyon's own luck, did not need to cut off the ontail by illegal methods. He's no life-tenant of Carbery, as he makes me feel whenever our views don't exactly coincide; could leave it to my sisters; or back again, if he chose, to the De Vere lot; and so, what interest he could have had in spiriting away little Mabel Denzil, is a question that I defy *Œdipus*, or a modern racing prophet, to answer.' Having said which, the captain rang the bell for something to drink, drank that something, and immersed his fine faculties in the delightful study of a sporting newspaper.

Jasper had not had leisure to thread his way very far through the labyrinth of darkling vaticinations, so dear to men who like himself are of the horse, horsey, as to probable or certain winners of important events to come off, or to discriminate with sufficient nicety between the inherent truth or falsehood of the reports that made the barometer of the betting world oscillate so wildly between panic and exultation, before the grinding of wheels on the smooth gravel announced the arrival of the carriage, and that Sir Sykes's ward was at the threshold of Carbery Court, her future home.

'I'd give a trifle,' thought Jasper, 'to know how many throbs to the minute the governor's pulse is giving just now. I suppose, like a pattern guardian, he will receive her in the hall. I'll wait till the first disjointed welcomes are over, and then drop

in and inspect the new importation. I wonder if she drinks rum, like her brother?'

The captain had drawn, mentally, a fancy portrait of Hold's sister, and had marvelled how Blanche and Lucy would be likely to get on with such a one as she could scarcely fail to be. But at the very first glance Jasper abandoned as untenable the conjecture that Miss Willis could drink rum, and he owned to himself, with the candour which men of his stamp exhibit in self-communing alone, how very wide of the mark was the likeness which his imagination had traced.

Miss Willis was very short and slight, and the deep mourning which she wore made her look even slighter and shorter than she really was. She had jet black hair that curled naturally, which, as if in ignorance or defiance of fashion, she wore in a crop, and which made the whiteness of her skin seem more conspicuous than it would otherwise have done. A pale little face, lit up by a pair of fine dark eyes, that drooped modestly to the carpet, as suitable to her shy, timid air. Whether she were pretty or the reverse, was not to be so summarily settled as is the case with most of her sex.

It was the eyes, and the eyes alone, that lent a marked peculiarity to the countenance of Sir Sykes's ward. Look at them, and the verdict that Miss Willis was charming would have been pronounced by many women and most men. Confine the scrutiny to the other features, and the judgment that the Indian orphan was a plain, pale little creature, would as inevitably have resulted. She looked young, quite a girl. The delicate smoothness of her cheek suggested that her age might be under twenty; but there was a subdued thoughtfulness in her aspect that might have harmonised well with her years, had she been older by a lustrium.

'I was talking of *Œdipus*,' such was Jasper's soliloquy after a half-hour spent in the new arrival's company; 'but here is the Sphynx herself, by Jove!'

It was with an inexpressible sentiment of relief that the baronet saw what style of person his ward appeared to be. Here were no solecisms in breeding, no coarseness of tone, or affectations more painful than honest roughness ever is, to vince at, to gloss over, to excuse on the ground of a youth spent in a far country, and often in stations where European society was scarce, and perhaps not always choice as regarded its quality. Sir Sykes had reckoned, at best, on a probationary period during which he should have had to play the irksome part of an apologist for the shortcomings of her whom he had invited to be the companion of his own daughters.

But Sir Sykes and Jasper, too, were forced to admit that Miss Willis was either an actress of consummate address, or, what really seemed the more probable, was merely appearing in her genuine character. Timid and somewhat constrained, but not awkward, was her manner of responding to the warm greeting of Sir Sykes's two daughters and to the grave urbanity of the baronet himself. She did not say much; but her voice trembled when she thanked Sir Sykes for his 'extreme kindness' to a stranger like herself. Then Blanche kissed her. She should not be a stranger long, she said. And then the girl broke down, sobbing. 'How good you all are to me,'

she said, 'I hope—I do hope not to be very troublesome, not to.'

And then there were more tears and more kissing; and the Misses Denzil took complete possession of their new friend, and bore her off to be installed in her room, and to learn to be at home at Carbery. Nothing could have gone off better than the orphan's reception; and even Jasper felt this, and forbore to sneer. His own heart was as hard as the nether millstone; but he accepted the fact that his sisters possessed organs of a different degree of sensibility, precisely as he owned that roses had perfume, and that the thrushes and nightingales sang sweetly in the garden.

'She's no more the sister of yonder pirate fellow,' such was the captain's conclusion, 'than the last Derby winner was a drayhorse. I thought theascal spoke mockingly of the relationship between her and him. No; she's not Hold's sister. I wonder whether she is mine?'

In the course of the afternoon of that day, Lord Harrogate, who had ridden over from High Tor, made his appearance. There was, as has been mentioned, a frequent exchange of neighbourly communications between the two great houses of the vicinity. The Earl, it is true, seldom called upon Sir Sykes, and Sir Sykes as seldom on the Earl; but the Countess was often at Carbery, and the young people of both families were much in each other's company. By the time of Lord Harrogate's visit, the girl from India had made considerable progress in winning the good-will of the Misses Denzil, prepossessed in her favour from the beginning. They had devoted the time since luncheon to shewing her the lions of Carbery—the tapestry of the 'Queen's Chamber,' faded but sumptuous; the stained glass; the chapel; the pictures; the grand conservatory, built by a former lord of Carbery, on a scale too ambitious for the use of a private family, and which was kept up at a cost which even Sir Sykes murmured at; and the other local curiosities.

The orphan had proved herself a patient and intelligent sight-seer, willing to be pleased, thankful for the kind desire of her entertainers that she should be pleased, and discriminating in her admiration. There was still some constraint in her manner, and of herself and her former life she scarcely spoke. Perhaps her loss was too recent for her to be able to talk freely of India, while of the journey to England she said little. 'There were fellow-passengers who took much care of me,' she replied once, in answer to a question on Lucy's part. 'Indeed, I met kindness on every hand. Perhaps my being alone, and my black frock.'—And then her eyes filled with tears and she turned her head away.

Lord Harrogate, when introduced to the baronet's ward, experienced one of the oddest sensations that he had ever felt, and akin to that tantalising, nameless thrill with which we all sometimes fancy that we have seen some place which we know ourselves to visit for the first time, or witnessed some scene which never before met our eyes. He had started, when first he saw Miss Willis, and had eyed her in the inquiring fashion in which we scan a face familiar to us. But it was evident that Miss Willis did not know him, as indeed it was impossible that she, Indian born and bred, and now in England for the first time,

should know him. And yet, long after he had left Carbery, the perplexing thought occurred to him again and again that he remembered the face, which, as all could aver, he had beheld for the first time on that day.

LIFE AT NATAL.

LADY BARKER, to whom the public is indebted for the most practically useful works on New Zealand which have been placed within the reach of the intending emigrant, having now completed a year's residence in our South African colony, gives us, in *A Year's Housekeeping in South Africa* (London: Macmillan & Co.), the benefit of her recent experience in a volume equally useful and entertaining. As compared with Christchurch, the capital of the province of Canterbury, in New Zealand, Maritzburg, in 'fair Natal,' is a backward and sleepy place. Recent events may have the effect of developing its ambition and accelerating its speed. But here is Lady Barker's description of its actual condition: 'Maritzburg consists of a few straight, wide, grass-grown streets, which are only picturesque at a little distance on account of their having trees on each side. On particularly dark nights, a dozen oil-lamps, standing at long intervals apart, are lighted; but when it is even moderate starlight, these aids to finding one's way about are prudently dispensed with. Only two buildings make the least effect. One is the Government House, standing in a nice garden, and boasting of a rather pretty porch, but otherwise reminding one, except for the sentinel on duty, of a quiet country rectory. The other is a small block comprising the public offices. A certain air of quaint interest and life is given to the otherwise desolate streets by the groups of Kaffirs, and the teams of wagons waiting for their up-country loads. Twenty bullocks drag these ponderous contrivances—bullocks so lean that one wonders how they have strength to carry their wide-spreading horns aloft; bullocks of a stupidity and obduracy unparalleled in the natural history of horned beasts.' These teams are called 'spanes' and when, on Sundays, the teams and the wagons are 'outspanned' on the green slopes around Maritzburg, the aspect of the place, generally dull and lifeless, becomes strikingly picturesque.

The road to Maritzburg from Port Durban, at which travellers to Maritzburg land from the steamer which conveys them to Cape Town, is very tedious to travel by the government mule wagon, which bumps about in ruts, and sticks in mud after a fashion that renders the prospect of the railway now in course of construction very attractive to the expectant colonists; but it is also very beautiful. 'Curved green hills dotted with clusters of timber exactly like an English park, and a background of distant ranges rising in softly rounded outlines, with deep violet shadows in the clefts, and pale green lights on the slopes,' form its principal features. Nestling amid this rich pasture-land are the kraals of a large Kaffir 'location'; and it is satisfactory to learn that in our South African colony at least, the native population has not been entirely sacrificed to the white man.

At Durban there is a funny little railway between the town and the 'Point'; 'a railway,' says Lady

Barker, 'so calm and stately in its method of progression, that it is not at all unusual to see a passenger step deliberately out when it is at its fullest speed of crawl, and wave his hand to his companions as he disappears down the by-path leading to his little home. The passengers are conveyed at a uniform rate of sixpence a head, which sixpence is collected promiscuously by a small boy at odd moments during the journey.'

A great, indeed an inexhaustible, charm of the country is the wonderful profusion and variety of flowers which grow everywhere; precious things only to be seen here in stately glass houses and per favour of scientific head-gardeners, growing in wild abundance, hiding the ugliness of buildings, delighting the eyes and cheering the heart of the colonist. As the drawbacks to a residence in 'fair Natal' are numerous and undeniable, it is right to dwell a little upon the exceeding beauty of floral nature there. If flowers could only be eaten, what a prosperous place Natal would be, or if the soil would only grow cereals as it grows flowers! To walk on the grassy downs is to walk among beautiful lilies in scarlet and white clusters, endless varieties of periwinkles, purple and white cinerarias, and golden bushes of the Cape broom, which we all know here as so great a beautifier of landscape. Tall arum lilies fill every water-washed hollow in the *spruils* (or brooks), and ferns of all kinds abound.

If the Kaffirs would work with even moderate application, the formation of a luxuriant garden of fruit, flowers, and vegetables would be easily within the reach of any dweller on the soil. The grass is always cleared away for a considerable distance round the house, because snakes are unpleasantly numerous, and grass affords cover for them; in the instances of fine gardens, a broad walk of a deep rich red colour intervening between the house and the gardens, contrasts beautifully with the flower-beds, which are as big as small fields.

The red soil is very destructive to clothing, but it adds to the beauty of the landscape. 'Green things,' says the author, describing a Natal garden, 'which we are accustomed to see in England in small pots, shoot up here to the height of laurel bushes. In shady places grow many varieties of fern and blue hydrangea, and verberna of every shade floridish. But the great feature of this garden is roses, of at least a hundred different sorts, which grow untrained, unpruned, in enormous bushes covered by magnificent blossoms; each bloom of which would win the prize at a rose-show. Red roses, white roses, tea roses, blush roses, moss roses, and the dear old-fashioned cabbage rose, sweetest and most sturdy of all; there they are at every turn—hedges of them, screens of them, and giant bushes of them on either hand.' Add to this a bright swift brook trickling through the garden, the constant sweet song of the Cape canary, and crowds of large butterflies of 'all glorious hues,' which are quite fearless and familiar, perching on the flowers and on the walks, and one gets a delightful notion of a Natal garden.

This is, however, the bright side of the picture of life in our South African colony; its practical aspects are less enticing, though the drawbacks are chiefly such as will be removed in most cases, and modified in all, when railway traffic shall be established in the country; a devoutly-to-be-

wished consummation, not very distant. At present, we are told, the necessities of life are very expensive and difficult to procure; the importation of English servants is almost always a failure; and the Kaffirs, though they have many good qualities, are difficult to teach, very lazy, and given to starting off to their native kraals for an improvised holiday of uncertain duration, without the smallest regard to domestic exigencies or the convenience of their employers.

The soil is wonderfully prolific but under-cultivated, and the cost of transport is enormous. Here is a statement which will no doubt in a few years be looked back upon with wonder by the author herself, and read with self-gratulatory retrospective compassion by settlers in Natal under the railway régime: 'The country' (between Maritzburg and Durban) 'is beautiful; but except for a scattered homestead here and there, not a sign of a human dwelling is there on its green and fertile slopes. All along the road, shrill bugle-blasts warned the trailing ox-wagons, with their naked "forelooper," at their head, to creep aside out of the way of the open brake in which we travelled. I counted one hundred and twenty wagons that day on fifty miles of road. Now, if one considers that each of these wagons is drawn by a span of thirty or forty oxen, one has some faint idea of how such a method of transport must use up the material of the country. Something like ten thousand oxen toil over this one road summer and winter; and what wonder is it not only that merchandise costs more to fetch up from Durban to Maritzburg than it does to bring out from England, but that beef is dear and bad?

As transport pays better than farming, we hear on all sides of farms thrown out of cultivation; and in the neighbourhood of Maritzburg it is esteemed a favour to let you have either milk or butter at exorbitant prices and of most inferior quality. When one looks round at these countless acres of splendid grazing-land, making a sort of natural park on either hand, it seems like a bad dream to know that we have constantly to use preserved milk and potted meat, as being cheaper and easier to procure than fresh.'

Durban is a picturesque town, but the sand and the dust are overpowering. Fine timber abounds; the different kinds of wood having the queerest of names. Three of the hardest and hand-somest native woods are called respectively stink-wood, breeze-wood, and sneeze-wood. In Durban too, magnificent flowers are everywhere in the utmost profusion; at the fête of 'The First Sod' the spot was beautifully decorated with plants and blossoms which would have cost a large sum in England; but these were cheaper than the nails and string used in their arrangement. This fête of 'The First Sod' afforded a favourable opportunity for seeing all classes of the population, colonists, Kaffirs, and coolies, for they all flocked into Durban; and Lady Barker says a shrewd thing in reference to the populace in general: 'It was the most orderly and respectable crowd which could possibly be seen. In fact, such a crowd would be an impossibility in England or any higher civilised country. There were no dodging vagrants, no slatternly women, no squalid, starving babies. In fact, our civilisation has not yet mounted to effrescence, so we have no dregs.'

We have been told wonders of the salubrity and delightfulness of the climate of Natal; but Lady Barker does not indorse the statements in which we have hitherto placed confidence. The alternations of heat and cold are very trying; the rains are sudden and violent; and thunder-storms are of almost daily occurrence and great severity. After one very grand storm she found a multitude of beautiful butterflies dead on the garden paths; their plumage was not dimmed nor their wings broken; they might have been ready prepared for a collection, quite dead and stiff.

Amongst the fauna of Natal, birds, reptiles, and insects abound. The natives suffer much from snake-bites, and white new-comers from mosquitos; all classes from 'ticks,' which also persecute the dogs and horses. The native language is very melodious and easily learned; and the Kaffirs pick up a little English readily enough. They are indeed a clever race and very home-loving. One genius of the author's acquaintance, called 'Sixpence,' had actually accompanied his master to England, whence he returned with a terrible recollection of an English winter, and a deep-rooted amazement at the boys of the Shoe Brigade who wanted to clean his boots. That astonished him, Sixpence declares, more than anything else. Lady Barker is emphatic in her advice to all colonists that they should make up their minds from the first to have Kaffir servants. One 'Tom,' a nurse-boy, figures in her book most amusingly; he is a capital fellow; and it is to be hoped he has abandoned the intention, which he confided to his mistress, of resigning his position after 'forty moons,' because by that time he should be in a position to buy plenty of wives, who would work for him and support him for the rest of his life. A Kaffir servant usually gets a pound a month, his clothes, and food. The clothes consist of a shirt and trousers of coarse check cotton, and a soldier's cast-off greatcoat for winter—all the old uniforms of Europe find their way to South Africa; and the food is plenty of 'mealies'—or maize meal for 'scoff,' the native name for a mixture which probably resembles porridge. If a servant be worth making comfortable, one gives him a trifle every week to buy meat. The only effectual punishment and the sole restraint which can be placed on the Kaffir propensity to break things, is a system of fines.

A native kraal consists of a cluster of huts which exactly resemble huge beehives. There is a rude attempt at sod-fencing round them, and a few head of cattle graze in the neighbourhood. Women roughly scratch the earth with crooked hoes to form a mealy-ground. Cows and mealies are all the Kaffirs require, except blankets and tobacco. The latter is smoked out of a cow's horn. 'They seem a very gay and cheerful people,' says the author, 'to judge by the laughter and jests I hear from the groups returning to their kraals every day by the road just outside our fence. Sometimes one of the party carries an umbrella; and the effect of a tall Kaffir clad in nothing at all, and carefully guarding his bare head with a tattered "Gamp," is very ridiculous. Often one of the party walks first, playing upon a rude pipe; whilst the others jig after him, laughing and capering like boys let loose from school, and all chattering loudly.'

No man, except he be a white settler's servant,

ever carries a burden. When an 'induna' or chief is 'on the track,' he rides a sorry nag, resting only the point of his great toe in the stirrup, like the Abyssinians. He is followed by his 'tail' or great men, who carry bundles of sticks and keep up with the ambling steed. Then come the wives, bearing heavy loads on their heads; but walking with firm erect carriage, their shapely arms and legs bare, their bodies, from shoulder to knee, clothed in some coarse stuff, which they drape in exquisite folds. Lady Barker describes the Kaffir women as looking neither oppressed nor discontented, but healthy, happy, jolly, lazy, and slow to appreciate any benefit from civilisation, except the money, concerning which they, in common with most savages, display a keenness of comprehension hardly to be improved upon.

A dozen miles from Maritzburg, on the road which forms the first stage of the great overland journey to the Diamond Fields, is the little town of Hawick, on the river Umgeni, which widens down just beneath it to an exquisitely beautiful fall. Over the brink goes the wide, smooth, waveless sheet of water, in an absolutely straight descent of three hundred and twenty feet. From the highest point of the road above the river, the Drakensberg mountains, snow-covered, except in the hottest summer, are visible, and though majestic, they are disappointing. They are a splendid range of level lines, far up beyond the floating clouds. 'I miss,' says the author, 'the serrated peaks of the Southern Alps and the grand confusion of the Himalayan range. This is evidently the peculiarity of the mountain formation of South Africa; I noticed it first in Table Mountain at Cape Town; it is repeated in every little hill between Durban and Maritzburg, and carried out on a gigantic scale in this splendid range.'

Lady Barker made an interesting excursion of over one hundred miles into the Bush, where she saw real savage Kaffir life, splendid forest scenes, and came on traces of the wild animals, which are being rapidly exterminated. With one forest picture we regretfully take leave of this interesting volume: 'The tall stately trees around, with their smooth magnificent boles, shoot up straight as a willow wand for sixty feet and more before putting forth their crown of leafy branches; the more diminutive undergrowth of graceful shrubs and plummy tufts of fern and lovely wild-flowers, violets, clematis, wood anemones, and hepaticas, shewing here and there a modest gleam of colour. But indeed the very mosses and lichens on our feet are the very study, and so are the details of the delicate green tracery creeping close to the ground. Up above our heads the foliage is interlaced and woven together by a perfect network of "monkey-ropes," a stout and sturdy species of liane, which are used by the troops of baboons which live in those great woods, coming down in armies when the mealies are ripe, and carrying off the cobs by armfuls.' It is spring-tide (September) when Lady Barker lays down her pen; soon, we hope, to resume it, and tell us of the growth of the colony. 'Everything is bursting hurriedly and luxuriantly into bloom. The young oaks are a mass of tender green, and even the unpoetical blue gums try hard to assume a fresh spring tint. The fruit-trees look like large bouquets of pink blossom, and the locust trees afford good sport in climbing and stone-throwing

amid their cluster of yellow plums. On the *veldt* the lilies are pushing up their green sheaths and white or scarlet cups through the yet hard ground, and the black hill-slopes are turning a vivid green, and the flowers are springing up in millions all over my field like flower-beds. Spring is always lovely everywhere, but nowhere is it lovelier than in fair Natal.'

A PERILOUS POSITION.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'Now, look here, Fred; you're exactly an hour and a half to get back in,' said Mr Middleton after luncheon. 'I shall be at the mill by three precisely. Are you sure you can manage it?'

'Oh, quite certain of it, sir,' was my confident reply. 'Why, I could go to M—— and back within the hour, easy riding. I'll not keep you waiting, depend upon it.' So saying, I vaulted the low sill of a window which stood wide open, and approached a couple who were strolling upon the lawn in front of Holm Court, the aristocratic-looking dwelling I had quitted.

Of this couple, one was a young lady, very fair and, in my eyes at least, very beautiful. She was the elder child and only daughter of the Mr Middleton already mentioned; a mill-owner who had realised a gigantic fortune by manufacturing; and in three days she was to be my wife. I for my part was a young man of good family, possessed of an independent fortune, in my twenty-second year, and ardently attached to my intended bride. That this attachment was mutual, I was, moreover, well assured; and on that delicious summer afternoon life opened before me full of brilliant promise. So happy indeed did I feel, that it was with difficulty I could restrain my jubilation within bounds, and compel myself to walk along the ground at a reasonable and gentlemanly pace, instead of running or leaping as, in my ecstasy, inclination prompted.

As I neared her my darling stepped forward to meet me; and after a few words upon another subject, she administered an anxious caution apropos of an adventure in which I was about to join, and to which I shall advert immediately. I assured her in return that there was no danger connected with it; and with an affectionate temporary adieu, we parted. Looking back as I prepared to mount my horse, which, held by a groom, stood ready saddled before the hall door, I saw my sweet girl rejoined by the companion, who, upon my approach, had sauntered away from her to some short distance. This companion was a Mr Marmaduke Hesketh, a fine-looking handsome man, about thirty-five, second-cousin to Mr Middleton, and lately returned from America. That this gentleman entertained towards my humble self feelings of a no very friendly character, I was well aware, although he had never addressed to me a single discourteous word; and the cause of his antipathy I had divined. He too was in love with Clara Middleton; I was sure of it, although he had never told her so; and although Clara herself, when I mentioned my impression to her, laughed at me for it, and called me a 'fanciful goose.' Her rallying, how-

ever, did not shake my conviction of the truth, and I felt very sorry for the poor man. As his successful rival, I could afford to pity him; and I had too much confidence in Clara's affection to feel an atom of jealousy, even when, as now, I left him alone in her company.

My foot in the stirrup, I was preparing for a spring to the saddle, when my name, called eagerly from behind, arrested the action; and turning, I saw Clara's brother—a nice-looking lad of twelve or so—running breathlessly down the broad steps of the entrance-hall.

'I say, Mr Carleton,' he panted on reaching my side, 'mamma wants you, please, to get her a bottle of chloroform from Pennick's the druggist when you're passing. And I say; mind you don't forget my string, will you? It's to be as strong as ever you can get it, you know, for it's such a big kite; and two balls, mind—big ones. You'll be sure and remember?'

'Oh, I'll remember, Charlie, safe enough,' I returned, smiling. 'String and chloroform—two important commissions. I'll not forget. Bye-bye, my boy.' And giving my horse his head, I trotted down the avenue, passed the lodge gates, and turned in the direction of the busy manufacturing town of M——.

My errand there was to see the clergyman who was to officiate at the marriage, and to arrange with him some slight alteration in the hour previously appointed for the ceremony. On my return from this visit I was, according to agreement, to meet Mr Middleton and Mr Hesketh on the site of a large cotton-mill in process of erection by the former. Of this mill one portion was already completed, namely, an enormous chimney—the broadest and tallest by far of any in the county. Mr Middleton, exceedingly proud of his chimney, and considering it a masterpiece of enterprise, had determined beforehand to ascend to its summit as soon as it should be finished; and in this expedition he had invited Mr Hesketh and myself to accompany him. The scaffolding used in building it having been removed, the ascent was to be made by means of a bucket or car (similar to those employed in the descent of coal-pits), affixed to two strong chains, passing over pulleys which ran on pins built into the chimney at the top; and the car was to be worked by a windlass.

It wanted exactly five minutes to three when I arrived at the rendezvous—my business at M—— transacted, and the chloroform and string I had been commissioned to purchase in my pocket. Giving my horse into the charge of one of Mr Middleton's employes, of whom there were several about, I walked towards the subterranean entrance to the chimney, near which I perceived Mr Marmaduke Hesketh standing. He looked rather pale, I thought, as courteously advancing on my approach, he imparted to me the information that Mr Middleton had just received a telegram summoning him to the bedside of his brother, Captain Middleton. That gentleman, it appeared, had been taken suddenly and dangerously ill; and full of anxiety, Mr and Mrs Middleton had already started off for F—— Junction, in order to catch the first train thence to the town, some twenty miles distant, where the captain was stationed with his regiment. Mr Middleton had, however, my informant proceeded, expressed, before leaving, a desire that we would not allow his absence to interfere

with our project of ascending the chimney; and he, Mr Hesketh, concluded by hoping that I would not object to accompany him alone, as he very much wished to see the view from the top, and would not, as I knew—for he was leaving Holm Court the next day—have another opportunity of doing so.

Young and fond of adventure, I had rather enjoyed the prospect of this enterprise, and though disappointed not to carry it out in my intended father-in-law's company, I saw no reason for declining Mr Hesketh's proposal to go with him alone. Accordingly, signifying my assent to it, we proceeded to enter the chimney together. Some half-dozen men were waiting within, in readiness to turn the crank of the windlass; and a moment later, swaying and vibrating in mid-air, we were slowly ascending through the gradually narrowing aperture of the great chimney. On gaining the top I was the first to step from the bucket; but Mr Hesketh was speedily by my side. The stone coping being fully two feet in width and having a narrow parapet a foot in height, presented a perfectly safe footing. I had a strong head, and had not expected to feel dizzy; yet, as I now gazed from that tremendous height, a singular feeling of insecurity seized upon me.

'Will you not walk round?' said my companion when we had stood together for a few seconds on the spot where we had alighted.

'Oh, certainly,' I replied with an assumption of boldness, but an inward shrinking from the ordeal; and with Mr Hesketh at my heels, I commenced the circuit.

About half the short distance was accomplished, when a hand laid on my arm arrested my steps. 'We've a fine view from here—haven't we?' observed Mr Hesketh as I stopped, a sensation of dread thrilling through my nerves at his touch. 'You see Holm Court there, down to the right, don't you?'

'Of course, quite plainly,' I returned, clearing my throat to cover the strange nervous uneasiness I was experiencing.

'So glad I persuaded you to come and see the view,' he remarked next in a very peculiar tone, and at the same time tightening his grasp upon my arm. 'But it's an awful height, isn't it; I hope you don't feel giddy?'

'Not at all,' I replied, endeavouring to keep my composure as I gazed downwards at the long perpendicular wall of smooth brick, but feeling that I was trembling perceptibly.

'And yet there is but a step between us and death,' he pursued with a sneer. 'Hollo! I'm quoting Scripture, I declare. You wouldn't have expected that of me; would you?'

'Oh, anybody can quote Scripture, you know,' I responded with a ghastly attempt at airiness. 'But I say, Hesketh, let go my arm, will you? You're hurting me.'

'Hurting you, am I? Ha, ha! I beg your pardon, I'm sure,' he laughed, increasing instead of diminishing the vice-like pressure of his fingers. 'I wouldn't hurt you for the world; O no! But now, if you've quite finished with the scenery, Mr Frederick Carleton, I'll trouble you to give me your attention for a moment. I'm going to ask you a question, which you may perhaps consider somewhat curiously timed. I am not a vain man, that I know of; but I should like to have your

opinion respecting my personal appearance. Should you feel justified now, for instance, in describing me as a well-built, powerful kind of man?'

Considering that he was upwards of six feet in height, broad and stout in proportion, with well-developed sinewy limbs, the description would have been accurate; and I said so.

'If you feel any doubt of it,' he resumed, still in the same peculiar tone, 'oblige me by examining that muscle.' And he stretched out for my inspection an arm that could have felled an ox—firm and strong as a bar of iron.

'I am quite satisfied of your muscular strength and powerful physical development, Mr Hesketh,' I said, with an effort to appear unconcerned and amused, which I was conscious was a dead failure. 'And now, with your permission, I think we had better descend.'

'Not just this moment, my precious little bantam cock,' was the startling rejoinder. 'Sorry to detain you, believe me, but I must trouble you with another question. Supposing, now, that you and I, dear friend, were to have a tussle at the top of this chimney, and that each of us was trying to throw the other over, which, should you think, would have the better chance of accomplishing his purpose?'

Summoning to my aid all the manliness of which I was possessed, I courageously declined to answer this question—asserting that the case was not a supposable one, seeing that I entertained towards him no feelings of enmity, and that I felt sure he had no desire to injure me.

'Look in my face and see if I haven't!' he rejoined in loud fierce accents, very different from those he had hitherto employed. 'Look in my face, Mr Frederick Carleton, and see if I haven't!'

I did look, and my heart died within me—for on the face of the man who still retained my arm in his iron grip on the top of that terrible chimney, I saw an expression of fiendish hate and malignance, of the like of which I could not have believed a human countenance capable.

As my eyes fell before the awful glare of his, he laughed. 'You have read your answer, I see,' he said. 'And now, listen. Seat yourself upon the parapet exactly where you now stand; observe as closely as you please what I am about to do; but stir one step to hinder it, and as I live, I will hurl you below!'

The threat, I knew, was no vain one; the man who uttered it overtopped me by the head and shoulders, and possessed double my strength. Resistance, therefore, would have been entirely useless; and trembling in every limb, I obeyed the command, and seated myself. And this was what I then beheld. Approaching the mass of machinery against which rested the wooden box or car wherein we had ascended, Mr Hesketh leaned over the edge of the chimney, and deliberately lifted this up from one of the two strong iron hooks upon which it hung suspended. Then slipping the loosened chain over the pulley, he sent it clattering towards the ground below. A horrified shout from the men who stood by the windlass greeted this act, coming up hoarse and discordant from the distance; and bending forwards I answered that shout with an imploring cry for aid—a wild vain cry! The men, of course, could not help me; and with sickening despair I watched them retreating to the subterranean passage, to save

themselves from danger—as mounted now upon the projecting machinery, Mr Hesketh loosened the remaining hook of the car and precipitated it into the abyss beneath.

MISPRINTS.

MISPRINTS, errors of the press, printers' blunders, typographical mistakes—call them what we may—are so numerous that every reader meets with them occasionally. Budgets of ludicrous examples are now and then given in the popular journals; and these budgets might be greatly extended. Our *Journal* gave its quota more than thirty years ago; and the matter was again touched upon in the volume for 1872.

Many errors consist in the omission of a single letter in a single word, altering the sense most materially. Thus, an omission of the letter *t*, in a work by Dr Watts, made immortal into *immoral*; and other grotesque instances of this kind of error could be given. The heedless substitution of one letter for another, without exceeding or falling short of the proper number of letters in the word, is a very frequent form of blunder. 'Bring him to look' is a poor version of 'bring him to book.' A candidate at an election certainly did not mean, as a newspaper implied, that he fully expected to come in 'at the top of the pole.' A compositor, perhaps a learner, being unable to make out a Greek word of three letters, set them down as the three numerals to which they bore some resemblance in shape, namely 185. At a public demonstration the mob rent the air with their *smuts*. Dr Livingstone's cap, as worn when Mr Stanley met him in the heart of Africa, was said in one of the papers to have been '*famished* with a gold-lace band.' In old English printing, the syllable *con* was often contracted to something like the shape of the figure 9; and this numeral is to be found in many books, even standard works, where it has no right whatever; in one edition of the *Monasticon Anglicanum* for instance, the word conquest is represented as 9quest. There are both a wrong letter used and a letter omitted in the startling statement, that a right reverend prelate was highly pleased with some ecclesiastical *iniquities* shewn to him.

A useful question has been asked, and to some extent discussed, whether several of the above-cited misprints of single letters, or others similar to them, may not be due to the arrangement of the compositor's working apparatus? Mr Keightley suggested, a few years ago, that possibly some of the varied readings of passages in Shakspeare might be due to the compositor dipping his fingers into the wrong cell, and others to the fact that wrong types have got into the right cell. Most persons who have visited any of the printing establishments are aware that the compositor's types are placed in flat cases provided with a number of small cells or receptacles, each for one particular letter of one particular class of type. There are two cases, one called the *upper* and the other the *lower*; the former being for the capitals, the latter for the small letters. Both cases are placed before the compositor, inclining upwards from front to back, the upper more inclined than the lower. The cells are not ranged in regular

alphabetical order, but in such manner that those containing the letters most wanted shall be grouped together near the compositor's hand, leaving such letters as *j, k, g, x, z*, &c. to occupy cells near the margin of the case. May not some types fall out of an overfilled cell into the one just below it; or may not the filling of a pair of cases with new type be so carelessly managed that a few fall over into the wrong cells; or may the compositor, in distributing the type after printing, now and then drop a type into a wrong cell?

A practical printer will answer such a question in the affirmative. The letters *b* and *l*, for instance, being in contiguous cells, one may fall or slip down into the cell belonging to the other, which might be the cause of 'bring him to book' being changed into 'bring him to look.' The old form of type for the double letter *st* is believed to have led to many misprints—such as nostrils being expressed *stostriis*, in a Bible printed in the early part of the present century. Whether the types were arranged in the cases a hundred or two hundred years ago in the same order and manner as at present, might be worth a little investigation—in so far as any change of arrangement may have rendered either more or less frequent such misprints as would arise from the falling over of some of the types into wrong cells. There are now something like a hundred and fifty cells in a pair of cases for ordinary book and newspaper printing; even if there were the same number in former times, it does not necessarily follow that the arrangement of the rank and file would be the same.

Benjamin Franklin, when a young man, refused to give 'garnish' or 'pay his footing,' on being placed in a room of compositors; because he had already responded to a demand for similar black mail in another department of the printing-office. They took a peculiar method of punishing him, by disarranging some of the types in his cells when he was out of the room. Very likely this technical tribulation may have led him inadvertently to the committal of numerous misprints. Several years ago Mr H. Martin, of Halifax, adverted to a typographical error in a former communication of his to one of the journals, and added: 'Upwards of thirty years' experience in connection with the press has taught me to be very lenient towards misprints. The difficulty of detecting typographical errors is much greater than the uninitiated are inclined to believe. I have often observed that, even if the spelling be correct, a wrong word is very apt to remain undetected.' He notices an instance in an edition of Shakspeare's *Merchant of Venice*, where Portia's lines—

Young Alcides when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy—

were converted into nonsense by the simple change of Troy into *Tory*. 'In a short biographical notice of Pope which I compiled for an edition of his poems, I briefly enumerated his prose works, among which I named his *Memoirs of a Parish Priest*; when the proof came before me, I found that the compositor had set it *Memoirs of a Paint Brush*.' It is possible that this blunder may have arisen from a cause to which we shall presently advert, obscure writing in the author's manuscript; but Mr Martin also took notice of the matter mentioned above, namely the partial disarrangement

of some of the types in the cells, as a cause of typographical bewilderment.

This misplacing of types in cells would fail, however, to account for a multitude of blunders. The author, the compositor, and the 'corrector of the press' must be responsible on other grounds for 'A silver medal given to a florist for *stealing geraniums*;' and for putting a wrong date on the tops of some of the pages of a newspaper, such as the *Daily News* in one of its issues, which put 'Monday July 18th' on the top of one page, and 'Tuesday July 18th' on the top of all the others; and in a quite recent instance in the *Illustrated London News*, where on the top of one page Saturday was assigned to a date that certainly did not belong to it. At the Duke of Wellington's funeral in 1852, Sir Peregrine Maitland was one of the pall-bearers. A statement appeared in some of the journals to the effect that when Sir Archibald Alison published the last volume of his *History of Europe*, the name of Sir Peregrine Maitland appeared as Sir Peregrine *Fiddle*; and it was remarked that such a misprint could not have been otherwise than intentional, a poor attempt at a joke on the part of the compositor, or the 'corrector.' In the only copy which we have consulted, this absurdity does *not* appear—a negative testimony so far as it goes in favour of the compositor.

The wrong placing of words in lines, and lines in columns or pages, is an instance of careless 'making-up,' for which the compositor in the first place is clearly responsible, but which as certainly ought to be detected in the proof by the corrector. Nevertheless, the examples of this are manifold. Sometimes a whole line is transposed higher up or lower down the page than the proper place; and at others one single word makes an excursion to a line where no reader would look for it. We notice, for instance, in one of the magazines for September 1877 the word *see* is used where it has no meaning; twelve lines lower down occurs the word *They* where it has no meaning; but on transposing the two words, nonsense becomes converted into sense. A practical printer could tell us how such an error might arise in the technical management of his 'composing-stick' and 'form;' but to outsiders it is well-nigh incomprehensible.

It was a little too bad in the printers of a Cambridge Bible, published some years back, that such a line should appear as 'I will never *forgive* thy precepts.' Here there was no writer nor transcriber concerned; the compositor made the blunder, and the press-reader passed it without detection; because as new editions of the Bible, unless newly annotated, are copied from the print of a previous edition, no manuscript is needed. A somewhat trifling error, though puzzling in its result, occurs in spacing the words: the last letter or syllable of one word is inadvertently placed at the beginning of the next, or else the first is placed at the end of the preceding word. When a lady is said, in a recent novel, to 'rush downstairs *without stretched* arms,' we know what is meant; but the corrector ought not to have passed such a slip unnoticed. On one occasion—perhaps one among many—a foot-note is incorporated in the body of the page, throwing the whole sense of a paragraph into utter confusion. A printer will know how this may occur, in arranging

his lines into pages; but what is the corrector about?

The most trying part perhaps of a compositor's duty is to decipher the writing of some authors whose manuscripts have to be set up in type. No one can conceive, merely judging from the interchange of ordinary letters between relations and acquaintances, the large amount of badly written manuscript which reaches the printing-offices. And it is known that some of our most eminent authors, whose veritable words are regarded as more important than those of other men, are great sinners in this respect; they torment the compositor with specimens of the art of penmanship almost hopelessly unintelligible. Our readers will find this part of the subject—that is the misprints that are due wholly to the bad writing of the author or amanuensis, and not to carelessness shewn by the compositor or the corrector—fully illustrated by examples in the article 'Wretched Writers' in this *Journal* for March 14, 1874. The late Horace Greeley, the distinguished American, is pictured in that article as about the worst penman that ever disturbed the peace of a compositor.

A word or two about correctors and correcting. When the compositor has set up and arranged matter enough for say a sheet, a 'proof' is pulled at the hand-press, and the 'first reader' is employed to examine it closely for the detection of any technical errors; then, with the aid of a 'reading-boy,' he compares the paragraphs, one after another, with the author's manuscript, corrects as he goes on by means of marginal marks on the proof, and queries any doubtful word or passage to which he wishes to draw the author's attention. The compositor makes all the corrections suggested by this 'first reader' and for common cheap kinds of printing this is enough; but for better work, a 'second reader' is employed to correct not merely the compositor but to advise even the author in regard to badly chosen words or badly arranged sentences—an intellectual revision, in fact, often performed by men who sometimes themselves afterwards rise to distinction as authors. The perplexities that beset the printer's reader were pretty fully set forth thirteen years ago in the *Journal*; and we need say nothing more on that subject. What with the reading-boy, the first reader, and the second reader, we see that there are many possible responsibilities for misprints besides those due to the author, the copyist or amanuensis, and the compositor. An impartial distribution of blame is hence desirable so far as it can be done.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS.

In a curious and instructive book which we have just read, entitled *Nature's Teachings*, by Mr Wood, we are shewn that scientific inventions, no matter how original and ingenious they may appear to be, have each and all been anticipated in the world of nature.

Countless inventions have been made by man without his having any knowledge of the fact that the machine which in its first idea sprang from a single brain, and was afterwards, during the progress of time, slowly improved and perfected perhaps by many successive generations of

inventors, had been in use in nature in a more perfect form than art could accomplish, for ages before man existed on the earth. There is scarcely a principle or part in architecture that has not its natural parallel—walls, floors, towers, doors and hinges, porches, eaves, and windows; thatch, slates, and tiles, girders, ties, and buttresses, bridges, dams, the pyramid, and even mortar, paint, and varnish, are all there. The Eskimo snow-house is an exact copy of the dwelling the seal builds for her tender young; the wasp's nest is composed of several stories supported on numerous pillars. The well-known instance of the building of the Crystal Palace on a 'new principle,' by Sir Joseph Paxton, is mentioned by the author, and is one of the many cases where man has confessedly copied nature in art; for that beautiful structure of iron and glass is simply an adaptation of the framework of the enormous leaves of the Victoria regia plant, which, owing to its formation, combines great strength with great apparent fragility. The present Eddystone lighthouse, which has so long withstood the force of the waves, was constructed in 1760 by Smeaton on an entirely new idea, the model being taken from a tree trunk, and the stones of which it was built being strengthened by being dovetailed into one another, as is the case with the sutures of the skull.

The study of the eye of man, as well as of birds, quadrupeds, and insects, has shewn how the most beautiful and gradually improved inventions, such as the telescope, microscope, pseudoscope, stereoscope, multiplying glass, &c., had already been perfected in nature for ages. By the combination of a few prisms and a magnifying glass, is produced that most wonderful of all optical instruments, the spectroscope, which equally reveals to us the constituents of the most distant stars or the colouring matter of the tiniest leaf; and yet the prismatic colours developed by this marvellous instrument have existed equally within the glorious arch of the rainbow and in the tiniest dew-drop as it glitters in the rising sun, ever since the sun first shone and the first rain fell.

In the arts of peace, we must look to the animal world for the most perfect specimens of tools for digging, cutting, or boring. No spade is equal to the foot of the mole; and our hammers and pincers look clumsy indeed beside the woodpecker's beak or the lobster's claw. Moreover, the dwellings in the construction of which such tools are employed, are models of beauty and ingenuity. Symmetrically shaped pottery made of moulded mud or clay is found in Nature in the form of birds' and insects' nests; in the jaws of the skate is found the crushing-mill, and in the tooth of the elephant the grindstone. In the ichneumon fly and the grasshopper was perfected from the first the modern agricultural improvement on the hand-dibble, the seed-drill. It is only of late years that the use of the teasel has been superseded by machinery; and brushes and combs, buttons, hooks, eyes, stoppers, filters, &c. are all found in Nature.

The principle of the diving-bell and air-tube exists in varieties of insects; birds make beds and hammocks and even sew, and the bower-bird emulates us in the construction of ornamental bowers and gardens. Graceful fans exist in plants and insects, cisterns in the traveller's tree and the camel's stomach, and natural examples of the balloon and parachute.

In other varieties of art, Nature has stolen a march on man; certain insects make paper of different textures; the art known as 'nature-printing' was anticipated in the coal measures. Star-stippling, as now used in engraving to produce extra softness of effect, exists in utmost perfection in every flower petal. The caddis-worm, common in all our fresh waters, constructs for itself a circular window-grating which admits the water and yet protects the pupa from injury, an apparatus exactly like the wheel-windows of a Gothic building. There is a bird in South Africa, the Sociable Weaver-bird, which may be looked upon as a dweller in cities, each pair, up to the number of perhaps three hundred, building its own nest; while the whole community unite to form a common roof or covering of thatch made from a coarse kind of grass, to protect their habitations from the heavy tropical rains. The Driver-ants, also found in Africa, are so sensitive to the fierce heat of the sun, that when on their marches they are obliged to cross open ground, 'they construct as they go on, a slight gallery which looks very much like the lining of a tunnel stripped of the surrounding earth;' and if they come to thick grass which makes a shelter for them, they take advantage of it, and only resume the tunnel when they emerge on the other side. Not less wonderful than any of these are the Trap-door spiders, of which mention has been before made in this *Journal*. In making their nests, they begin by sinking a shaft in the ground; it is then lined with a silken web, and closed by a circular door, which can scarcely be distinguished from the moss and lichens which grow around. The hinges are most exactly fitted, and the spider has an extraordinary power of closing his door from the inside, and resisting all intrusion.

It is curious that as we advance in the scale of creation these wonderful dwellings cease. Strange to say, the creature which roams at will through the forest, and has no settled resting-place, is higher in the scale of life—according to the recognised scheme of naturalists—than the animal that is mechanically capable of constructing the most perfect abode!

Mr Wood reminds us that though the march of Science has destroyed much of our belief in the sweet old tales of fairyland, yet she has given us ample compensation, inasmuch as the 'fairy tales of science' are in reality more full of grace and poetry than any of the myths that delighted our childhood. And many of the forms which meet us, if we apply ourselves to the study of natural history, are more full of quaint or graceful fancy than the wildest tales that have ever stirred the imagination of an Eastern story-teller. What can be more beautiful than the little Velella, a

sea-creature like a circular raft, with an upright membrane answering to a sail; 'semi-transparent, and radiant in many rainbow-tinted colours.' What more grotesque than the Archer-fish, 'which possesses the curious power of feeding itself by shooting drops of water at flies, and very seldom fails to secure its prey;' or the Angler-fish, which is endowed by Nature with a rod and bait ready adjusted. This remarkable creature has an enormous mouth; on the top of its head are certain prolonged cane-like filaments, beautifully set in a ring and staple joint, so as to turn every way; and at the end of these singular appendages is a little piece of flesh, which when waved about, looks like a living worm, and attracts the fish, which is then engulfed in the huge jaws of this natural angler.

Many interesting forms come to us from the water-world, suggestive of riffs, boats, oars, and anchors. An insect called the Water-boatman is itself both boat and oars, besides being its own passenger; the legs with which it rows are fashioned in most exact resemblance to the blade of an oar; or we should rather say that the blade of an oar resembles the leg of this Water-boatman. That fragile creature the Portuguese Man-of-war, which traverses the surface of the ocean like a bubble, and can at pleasure distend itself with air and float, or discharge the air and sink, shews us the principle of the life-dress in which Captain Boyton made his daring passage across the Channel. Cables too we have in plenty: the Plann, a kind of mussel, anchors itself to some rock or stone with a number of silk-like threads spun by itself; and the Water-snail moors itself, perhaps to a water-lily leaf, by means of a gelatinous thread, slight, almost invisible, yet very strong, which it can elongate at pleasure.

In connection with this there is a very curious account of a spider, which shews a marvellous power of adaptation. Its wheel-like net was in danger from a high wind. 'The spider descended to the ground, a depth of about seven feet, and instead of attaching its thread to a stone or plant, fastened it to a piece of loose stick, hauled it up a few feet clear of the ground, and then went back to its web. The piece of stick thus left suspended, acted in a most admirable manner, giving strength and support, and at the same time yielding partly to the wind. By accident the thread became broken, and the stick, which was about as thick as an ordinary pencil, and not quite three inches in length, fell to the ground. The spider immediately descended, attached another thread, and hauled it up as before. In a day or two, when the tempestuous weather had ceased, the spider voluntarily cut the thread and allowed the then useless stick to drop.' The plan here adopted by the spider is frequently followed by fishermen who during stormy weather at sea, ride out the gale by attaching the boat to their yielding nets.

It is natural to expect that in the arts of war and self-defence Nature should shew us an infinite variety; and man has not been slow in using his powers to adapt the same principles to his own use. If man has armed himself with spears or daggers, if he has dug pitfalls or set traps in hunting, his most deadly contrivances are but feeble adaptations of the weapons, offensive and defensive, with which Nature has endowed her offspring. We are prepared to find the serpent's fang

a terrible instrument; and we are not surprised that the piercing apparatus and sheaths of gnats and fleas, or the lancets of mosquitoes when magnified, are dangerous and blood-thirsty; but it is curious to find how many of these deadly weapons belong to the vegetable world. The sword-grass has a niched blade which, when magnified, is almost exactly the same as the shark-tooth sword of Mangia. There are nettles whose sting is sufficiently venomous to cause violent pain, inflammation, cramp, and even death; and it is well known that some of the most graceful of plants, such as Venus's Fly-trap, which is common in the Carolinas, and the Drosera or Sundew, one of our British plants, are in fact nothing but skilful traps to catch and digest unwary insects.

Some of the most curious of natural defences are those which simulate some form quite different from the true character of the creature. We are tempted to think of the mighty Book of Michael Scott, in which was

Much of glamour might,
Could make a ladye seem a knight,
The cobwebs on a dungeon wall
Seem tapestry in lordly hall.

And Nature, in her turn exercising her powerful glamour, can make a caterpillar seem a twig, or a moth look exactly like a withered leaf. The Spider-crab might be taken for a moving mass of zoophytes and corallines, so thickly is its shell covered with extraneous growths. The Leaf-insects are so exactly like leaves that the experienced eye can scarcely distinguish them from the leaves among which they are placed. We must all have noticed other instances in which the colours of insects, and also the plumage of birds, harmonise in a wonderful way with the scenes in the midst of which they are placed. Indeed there seems no end to the resemblance which may be traced between the works of Nature and those of man. Many of the most obvious of these strike us with fresh surprise when we find the comparison carefully drawn out. What a freak of Nature, for instance, are the apilides, the milk-cows of a species of ant; or the tailor-bird, which sews leaves together by their edges, and makes its nest inside them? 'It is sufficiently strange too, to remember that the elaborate process of paper-making was carried on by the wasps, ages before it was known to the Chinese.

One of the most powerful of all natural forces is that of electricity; and it is at present so little understood, and so full of mystery, that we may perhaps suppose that many of the most important discoveries of the future must lie in that direction. But Nature has known how to turn this as well as her other powers to her own use. She has her living galvanic batteries, such as the torpedo and the electric eel, both of which secure their prey by paralyzing it with their electric discharges. And the light of the glow-worm and that of the fire-fly, though hitherto it has been a puzzle to naturalists, may, there is little doubt, be referred to animal electricity.

After a careful perusal of the book, we are convinced that the more closely the connection between Nature and human inventions is observed, the more perfect and the more numerous will further discoveries be. Endowed with high moral capabilities of truth and justice, and benevolence;

gifted with reasoning faculties, which enable him to observe, to argue, to draw conclusions, it is for man himself to work according to the same laws which, unconsciously to themselves, govern the organisations of the lower animal, and the vegetable world.

WASTE SUBSTANCES.

CIGAR-ENDS.

PROBABLY few people in this country are aware that that usually wasted substance a cigar-end is utilised in Germany to a large extent, and with even beneficent results.

We can imagine many of our readers wondering what can be the object of collecting these small ends; and we will therefore briefly explain that they are sold for the purpose of being made into snuff, and that the proceeds of such sales are devoted to charitable purposes. There is in Berlin a society called the 'Verein der Sammler von Cigarren Abschnitten,' or the Society of Collectors of Cigar-cuttings, which has been in existence some ten years, and has done much good. Every Christmas the proceeds of the cigar-ends collected by this Society and its friends are applied to the purchase of clothes for some poor orphan children. In 1876 about thirty children were clothed by this Society, each child being provided with a shirt, a pair of good leather boots, a pair of woollen stockings, a warm dress, and a pocket-handkerchief. In addition to this, a large well-decorated Christmas-tree is given for their entertainment, and each child is sent home with a good supply of fruit and sweetmeats. Altogether more than two hundred poor orphan children have been clothed by this Society simply by the proceeds of such small things as cigar-ends.

The success of the Society at Berlin has induced further enterprise in the same direction, and it is now proposed to erect a building to be called the 'Deutsches Reichs-Waisenhaus' (Imperial German Orphan Home), where orphans who are left unprovided for may be properly cared for, clothed, and instructed. The site proposed for this institution is at Lehr in Baden, where there are a number of snuff manufactories, and it is therefore well adapted to the scheme, which we can only hope may be successfully carried out. Although the directors of this Home propose to have a plan prepared for a large building, only a small part of it will at first be erected, to which each year or two more rooms may be added, in accordance with the original plan, in proportion to the success which is found to attend the undertaking. It will be readily understood that a good many difficulties beset this scheme, for it requires the most perfect co-operation of the smoking community and some assistance also from the non-smokers; but much can be done by friends who will undertake the duty of collecting, and some of the most energetic of these are not unfrequently of the fair sex.

The system of collection, which is extended over a large part of Germany, is generally undertaken by one or two ladies or gentlemen in each town, who collect now and then from their smoking friends the ends which they have been saving up. These collectors either send on the cigar-ends to the central Society, or sell them on the spot and transmit the proceeds. This latter plan, when it

can be worked, is preferable, as saving expenses in carriage and packing. It is proposed that the number of children which each town shall have the privilege of sending to the Home shall be regulated according to the amount which they have contributed to the Society.

To insure the success of this institution, it will be absolutely necessary for all to unite and work together; each one must not leave it for his neighbour, thinking that one more or less can make no difference. To shew, however, what might be accomplished by a thorough unity in this matter, let us say that there are at least some ten millions of smokers in Germany; or to be very much within the mark, we will take only five million smokers who will give themselves the trouble, if such it is, of saving up their cigar-ends; and assuming that the cigar-ends of each person during one week are worth only a quarter *Pfennig* (ten *Pfennig* = one penny English), we have a total revenue for the year of six hundred and fifty thousand marks, or thirty-two thousand five hundred pounds. Now, these thirty-two thousand five hundred pounds, which, as a rule, are thrown away and wasted, can be used to provide a Home for at least thirteen thousand poor orphan children. Further, if the five million smokers would contribute but once a year the value only of a single cigar, say in Germany one penny, this would make an additional five hundred thousand marks, or twenty-five thousand pounds, which would clothe another ten thousand children.

Now we ask, is it not worth while to be careful in small things, and to save up these usually wasted cigar-ends, when we see what great things might result? We can only conclude by wishing success to this remarkable institution, which has taken for its motto the most appropriate words, 'Viele Wenig machen ein Viel;' or in the words of the old Scottish proverb, 'Many a little makes a mickle.'

LONG AGO.

He gave me his promise of changeless truth,
(Down in the wood where the ivy clings);
And the air breathed rapture, and love, and youth,
(And yon tree was in bud where the throstle sings).

He said he was going across the sea,
(Far from the wood where the ivy clings),
And would bring back riches and jewels for me;
(But brown leaves shake where the throstle sings).

Hope made Life like a summer morn;
(Sweet was the wood where the ivy clings);
Now my heart is cold, and withered, and worn,
(And the bough is bare where the throstle sings).

Days are dreary, and life is long;
(Yet down in the wood the ivy clings),
And the winds they moan a desolate song,
(And there's snow on the bough where no throstle sings).

Spring will come with its buds and leaves
(Back to the wood where the ivy clings);
But 'tis winter cold for the heart that grieves,
(And I hear not the song that the throstle sings).

J. C. H.

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THE CIVIL SERVICE SUPPLY ASSOCIATION.

WITHIN the last few years the progress of the Civil Service Supply Association in London has been so extraordinary that a few words concerning it may not be uninteresting to our readers.

The object of the society is 'to carry on the trade of general dealers, so as to secure to members of the Civil Service and the friends of members of the society the supply of articles of all kinds, both for domestic consumption and general use, at the lowest possible price,' on the principle of dealing for ready-money. Co-operation on the broadest scale of retail shop-keeping is brought into play. The organisation consists of three classes of purchasers: the holders of shares of the value of one pound each, and from whom the committee of management is chosen; ordinary members, who being connected with the Civil Service, pay two shillings and sixpence a year; and outsiders, or mere supporters of the concern (who, however, must be friends of members or shareholders), who pay the sum of five shillings annually. All have the same advantages in the purchase of goods, but members of the Civil Service have the privilege of having goods above a certain amount delivered carriage free. As the thing stands, the number of shareholders is limited to four thousand five hundred.

The constitution is a little complex, and to the non-initiated, perhaps not very rational; let it, however, be remembered that it is not so much a business concern, as what may aptly be termed a 'benefit society;' and if the objects of the society when it was started in 1866 have in late years been deviated from, it is more from the excessive growth of the institution than from any other cause. The Association has from less to more assumed truly gigantic proportions, and now takes rank as one of the wonders of the metropolis. The headquarters of the Association consist of huge and handsome premises in Queen Victoria Street, 'City,' the lease of which, subject to a ground-rent of one thousand four hundred pounds, has

been purchased, and which, together with certain additions to the building, has cost no less a sum than twenty-seven thousand pounds; but such is the increased value of property in this locality that they have recently been valued at thirty-two thousand pounds. On the ground-floor of this building, groceries of all kinds, wines, spirits, provisions, cigars, and tobacco are sold, forming three departments. On the first, all goods which come under the terms of hosiery, drapery, or clothing, besides umbrellas and sticks, are the articles of sale, forming two departments; and on the second floor, commerce is strongly represented by stationery, books, fancy goods, drugs, watches, and other miscellaneous goods, forming three departments. The third floor is appropriated for the offices of the clerks of the Association, who form a large staff, and for storage.

For the accommodation of West-end customers, an emporium in Long Acre was until recently used; but that becoming too small for an increasing trade, the Association has built commodious premises in Bedford Street, Covent Garden, costing twenty-five thousand pounds, whither the Long Acre business has been removed, and the arrangements of which are the same as at Queen Victoria Street. Not content with these, the Association has taken large premises at the back of Exeter Hall for storage purposes, as well as for the sale of various new articles and the carrying on of the tailoring department.

It is not a little astonishing to know that a society which originated in a very humble way indeed, has developed its business so much within little more than ten years that it requires more than six hundred *employees* for the furtherance of the concern. The secretary, who is the chief of this staff, has several clerks under him; and besides there are accountants, a treasurer, several store-keepers, clerks, assistants, cashiers, &c.—a body which costs the Association nearly fifty thousand pounds annually! The direction of the whole concern is vested in the hands of the committee, which numbers fifteen; and the shareholders

participate in the management so far as they are the constituents, so to speak, of the committee-men, the election taking place once a year, when five of the body go out in rotation. It may be added that there are likewise auditors, bankers, and other officials requisite to a society of this kind; and that the necessary managerial business is transacted at the ordinary meetings of the Association, twice a year.

The Civil Service Supply Association is said to take rank now amongst the largest buyers and sellers of this country, a circumstance we need not be surprised at when it is stated that the sales from the first year of the society's establishment to August 1877 amounted to upwards of six million pounds sterling; and the wonderfully rapid increase of the business may be judged by the fact that the sales of the Association, which in the first year (1867) amounted to £21,323, in the year ending August 1877 reached the large sum of £1,041,294. These figures are valuable in demonstrating the unprecedented success of this extraordinary Association, a success mainly due to the large body of members by which the Association is supported. Last year the number of clients was twenty-five thousand, including the four thousand five hundred shareholders already referred to. Last year each shareholder had the privilege of nominating two persons for membership, by which nine thousand outside members or subscribers will be added. We are further told that there is always a mass of applicants for admission to the Association, many of whom have been on the books of the society for years, unable to procure tickets.

Cheap goods being the main object of co-operative associations, we will now say a few words regarding the prices charged. At first the benefit in this respect was very appreciable; but as the society has increased, the benefit has, as a natural consequence of a corresponding increase in working expenses, to a certain extent decreased, and it may be added, is in many cases very variable. While on certain articles, such as fancy goods, drugs, perfumes, and the like, the reduction is considerable; on others again, such as tea, sugar, butter, and the like, which are of more common use, there is but a trifling difference between the Association's prices and those of the retail trade. This seems rather to defeat the true objects of co-operation, which are expected to convey benefit more in respect of articles of general consumption than of those much less necessary for common existence. The variability of reduction arises probably from the fact that goods sold at little profit by shopkeepers are also not to be sold much cheaper at the stores; while the goods on which most gain is made at shops are those on which the Association can afford to make large reductions; but by a strange fatality, they are, as a rule, the very articles less required than any others by the members of the society.

In calculating prices the committee deem it necessary to act so as to be on the safe side in case of any error that might arise. On an average, the prices charged to members are at the rate of ten per cent. above the wholesale prices, thus allowing a profit to defray working expenses, which are about seven and a half per cent. This allowance has always proved a generous one, for

besides covering the annual expenditure, there has always been an important surplus.

For some years this surplus was allowed to accumulate, it being thought that it might probably prove useful as a reserve fund; but when it reached the large sum of nearly one hundred thousand pounds, it was plainly apparent that steps should be taken to dispose of it and all future surpluses. As concerned the foregoing sum, the rules of the society according to the act of parliament under which the Association is incorporated, rendered appropriation of it in any way impossible; it was therefore set apart as a reserve fund, invested in the buildings, stock, &c. of the Association; but a new set of rules was formed by which all profits accruing thereafter were to be divided amongst the shareholding body, and placed annually to the credit of each, to be, however, only withdrawable by their reliefs after death, or when the accumulations on any share shall amount to one hundred and seventy-five pounds, when, in order to comply with the provisions of the Provident Societies Act, which limits the funds any member may have in a society enrolled under its provisions to two hundred pounds, the excess must be withdrawn. This arrangement, which was duly legalised, and came into force in March 1874, naturally gave the shares a far greater value than they had hitherto possessed, as will be seen from the fact, that from the date mentioned to August last there has accrued very nearly one hundred thousand pounds. If the profits continue at this rate, the shares will of course increase in value each year, and already—since recent alterations in the rules have made them transferable and saleable—shares have been disposed of for sums varying from twenty to thirty pounds each; hardly a bad investment, comparatively speaking, for the sellers, to whom they cost but ten shillings, the rate of interest being eleven hundred per cent. per annum! This large profit is, however, considered by many to be a really objectionable feature, and at variance with the principles of the Association, namely, 'to supply articles at the lowest possible price.' We believe this view is entertained by the Committee of Management, who are about to take steps to have the high rate of interest reduced.

Seeing that a large annual profit accrues to the Association, and causes an embarrassment, the inquiry naturally arises—why not lower the prices of articles so as to leave no profit whatever? There are various reasons, as we understand, why prices cannot be lowered beyond an assigned limit. The profit on small quantities of articles is, as has already been stated, so infinitesimally meagre as to admit of no sensible reduction. And in many cases it is important not to make such reductions as would trench on the business of wholesale dealers; there being, indeed, an apprehension that customers might purchase articles not for their own use, but to sell at some advance to retailers and others. After all, the profits arise more from the average gain than from a charge on the respective articles.

It was to be anticipated that retail dealers would be bitterly antagonistic to the Civil Service Supply Association; and so steady and sturdy was their opposition, that in its first years the Association experienced considerable difficulty in persuading wholesale houses to deal with it. Indeed

large orders were the only inducement by which these houses could be got to supply the goods required, and even now we believe some firms hang back. The transactions of the Association have, however, operated upon members of the retail trade, who finding their business affected, have in self-defence been forced to reduce their prices to the general public. It thus becomes apparent that the Civil Service and other kindred co-operative associations have directly benefited the masses, by inducing a general lowering of the cost of many articles of daily necessity.

As an instance of the difficulties and jealousies which have from time to time beset this beneficent institution, the committee for a long time found it difficult to get a certain good tailor, who as a rule disappeared in a mysterious manner. These difficulties have, however, with patience and perseverance, been overcome, and the tailoring branch has become very successful.

It may here be mentioned that all goods purchased at the stores must be described in the form of an order, which has to be examined and checked, and payment always made to properly constituted cashiers (never over the counter), before the receipt of the goods. Large orders undergo a thorough and strict examination, to see that the goods are for the legitimate use of the applicant member or shareholder, with the view of detecting any improper interference from retail dealers.

In its present successful condition, to which the Civil Service Association has so rapidly attained—the clear assets amounting in August 1877 to one hundred and ninety thousand pounds, after all liabilities had been paid—there are few things which cannot be obtained at or through the medium of the stores. It were a futile task to attempt even an approximate estimate of the goods that may be bought in this manner; suffice it to say that each and all are duly chronicled in the Association's Price List. This list, which is issued once every quarter, is no bad criterion of the success of the institution. When it was first issued, the contents covered no more than a small single sheet; now, however, it is a thick book of nearly three hundred pages. It is not only a record of all goods sold at the stores, but also contains the names and addresses of the various firms which have entered into arrangements with the society for selling their goods to members at a discount varying from five to twenty-five per cent.; and besides, a large portion of the volume is occupied with advertisements, which doubtless form no inconsiderable source of profit to the Civil Service Supply Association.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER VIII.—FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

'Now, Denzil, let us understand one another. I shall take it very kindly, dear boy, if you will do as I ask you in this matter. After all, it is no such extraordinary service that I crave at your hands. You have ridden a horse of mine, if my memory be good for anything, before to-day.' The speaker, who, for the convenience of a more distinct articulation, had withdrawn the cigar from between his lips, leaned back in his easy-chair,

as if to mark the effect of his words upon the visitor to whom he had addressed them. He was himself a gentleman of a portly presence and rubicund face, much taller and much heavier than his former friend and brother-officer. And whereas Jasper wore a civilian's suit of speckled tweed, Captain Progers shewed by his gold-laced overalls and braided tunic that he was still in the army.

The famous Lancer regiment to which Jasper had once belonged having changed their quarters from Coventry to Exeter, Captain Denzil had called upon his old comrades. There had been a champagne luncheon in honour of the late commander of No. 6 Troop; and on leaving the mess-room, Jasper had gone with his former intimate Jack Progers, to smoke a quiet cigar in his, Jack's room.

'We're old friends, sure enough,' returned Jasper meditatively, as he watched the spiral wreaths of smoke curling upwards—'and I do not like to be disobliging; but I can but repeat that I would rather not ride. My father would be vexed if I did.'

'And you are a very good boy, as we know; quite a pattern of filial decorum!' growled out the big man in the gold-laced overalls.

'That style of argument has no weight with me, Jack,' returned Jasper, with imperturbable good-humour. 'I am no stripling, like one of your newly joined, pink-faced cornets, to be goaded by a sneer into acting contrary to my judgment. And I don't mind owning that I am on my good behaviour at Carbery just now, and would rather not, please, do anything of which Sir Sykes would disapprove.'

'It would be well worth your while,' urged his host, striking his spurred heel into the ragged carpet; 'worth any man's while who was not, like young Mash the brewer, my new subaltern, born with a gold-spoon in his mouth. There are sixty-seven horses entered for the race, and we could share the stakes between us, if we win.'

'Yes—if we win!' returned Jasper with a laugh that was almost insolent. 'I have pretty well made up my mind, though, to renounce the character of gentleman rider for some time to come.'

'And quite right too; but there may be an exception—may there not—to so strict a rule?' cheerfully replied the other captain, as he arose and bustled himself in the concoction of some curious beverage, in which transparent ice and dry champagne, powdered sugar and sliced cucumber, strawberries and maraschino, were amalgamated into a harmonious whole. 'I shan't as yet take "No" for an answer, or give up the hope that you will stand by an old friend like myself in a matter which that old friend has very much at heart. With you in the saddle, I should feel victory certain.'

Confidence is strangely infectious. Jasper knew by the ring of his friend's voice that he was very much in earnest, and began for the first time to

consider that there must be some hidden reason for the cavalry officer's unprecedented pertinacity.

Captain John Prodgers was in his own line a typical officer of a class to be found in more than one fashionable regiment. Living as he had always done amongst men of rank and fortune, he had thriven somehow by dint of better brains and readier assurance than fell to the lot of his companions. No one knew whence he came. His origin seemed to date from the gazettement of his commission, and indeed he might be presumed, like a sort of regimental Minerva, to have sprung booted and armed into existence. Nobody had known him as a boy, but the grandest doors in London opened to let him in. Related to nobody of Pall-Mall repute, he was 'Jack Prodgers' to a dozen of Lord Georges and Lord Alfreds. The earthen pot swam gaily down the stream along with those of double-gilt metal, and it was certainly not the former that had suffered from any casual collisions.

'It certainly is queer,' remarked Jasper, sipping his first glass of the newly brewed compound, 'that sixty-seven horses should be entered for a quiet insignificant affair like our local steeple-chase. Pebworth, it strikes me, must blush to find itself famous. I for one am quite at a loss to account for the sudden interest which we Devonshire folks appear to have inspired in what is generally a tame rustic contest.'

Jack Prodgers, as he slowly sipped the cool contents of his huge green glass, smiled with an affable pride in the possession of superior knowledge, which was not lost upon his friend.

'You are not the only one, rely on it, Denzil, to make that remark,' he said complacently. 'Many a youngster who thinks he shews a precocious manliness by studying the sporting papers and talking of matters of which he knows as little as I do of Greek, is marvelling at the attention paid to a petty race at your father's park-gates.—Look here,' he added, handing to Jasper a newspaper carefully folded down: 'you see in that paragraph the latest intelligence. Two of the finest horses in England—The Smasher and Brother to Highflyer—are positively to appear at Pebworth. They are the favourites of course. Nobody condescends to give a thought for the present to the humble chances of my Irish mare, whose name you may notice near the bottom of the list. Now, will you ride Nora Creina?'

'She'll never gallop with Brother to Highflyer,' said Jasper decisively.

'Umph! perhaps not,' was her owner's dry answer, and there was something in the tone which made Jasper arch his languid eyebrows.

'I say Prodgers,' said Jasper, after a pause for reflection, 'what do you want me for in particular? I can ride, but so can others. Why not choose a heavy-weight jockey; or if you prefer it, some first-rate amateur like Sandiman or Lark, or Spurrier of the Hussars, men who make a living by putting their necks in jeopardy?'

'Because a professional rider would betray my confidence,' answered Prodgers frankly; 'and as for your gentlemen riders, well, well! It is a fine line, imperceptible sometimes, that separates the amateur from the hired jockey. Spurrier is as honest as the day—that I admit; but then he is one of those impracticable men who disregard hints and will not be dictated to. I don't exactly

wish to be brilliantly beaten, and to draw a big cheque by way of payment for the beating. No. My hope is in yourself.'

'I haven't seen the mare, you know,' said Jasper, hesitating.

'She is not a beauty,' replied Prodgers; 'nor will you like her better for seeing her, as you can of course before you leave. A great ugly fiddle-headed animal she is, Jasper. The man who sold her to me at Kildare, candidly admitted that there was not a single good point about her. You will not be pleased with her heavy head, awkward joints, and straggling build. No wonder that the notion of her success is scouted. Will you ride Nora Creina?'

Jasper, himself no novice, was excessively perplexed. He had a high esteem for the shrewdness of his knowing friend, and he liked Prodgers too as much as it was in his nature to like any man. While still in the regiment and in the heyday of his brief prosperity, the elder captain had been kind to him, warning him against some at least of the snares that beset careless youth, and winning but very little of his money. And here was his former Mentor actually importunate in his solicitude that Jasper should ride a hideous and undervalued quadruped, on the defects of which its proprietor expatiated with incomprehensible delight.

'The Irish mare is fast then?' said Jasper, bewildered.

Prodgers smiled mysteriously. 'Why, we've finished the cup,' he said. 'Here, Tomkins; get some more ice, and'—

'No, no; thank you,' said Jasper, rising with flushed cheeks. 'I have had enough, and it is time for me to be moving. But before I go to the railway station, I will take a peep at this phenomenon of yours, Prodgers, if you please.' The stable was visited accordingly; and Jasper, who had been prepared to see something ugly, found the reality to surpass his imagination.

'Queer-looking creature, isn't she? Lengthy as a crocodile, clumsy, and rough-conted in spite of grooming,' remarked Prodgers. 'I think I never saw a thoroughbred shew so few signs of breeding. Why, the white feet alone would disgust most judges of a horse.'

All this the owner of the Irish mare said in cheerful chuckling tones, rubbing his hands together the while, as if he spoke in jest. But Jasper Denzil, who knew enough of his friend to be aware that he was altogether incapable of an expensive joke, such as sending a worthless animal to the starting-post would be, and who was sufficiently experienced in horses to know how little can be known about them, began to entertain a profound distrust of his own judgment.

'About fit, after all, for a railway omnibus,' said Prodgers. 'Here we are at the station. Your train, eh? We've just saved it.'

'Well, I'll ride for you, Jack,' said Jasper as he took his seat.

'All right, dear boy. I'll send you a line about arrangements,' was the answer.

And so the confederates parted.

Jasper Denzil's heart was lighter as he drove briskly through the grand avenue at Carbery Chase (he had left his groom and tandem at Pebworth to await his return) than it had been of late. The stagnation of his recent life in the Devonshire

manor-house had been agreeably disturbed. He seemed for a time to have again a share in what was to him the real world of thought and action—of no very elevated thoughts or noble actions, but such as suited him—and to be again something more than heir-apparent to a baronetcy and heir-presumptive to an estate.

'I wonder now,' muttered Jasper, as he brought his equipage at an easy swinging trot up the smooth road, 'what is the peculiarity of yonder ugly animal, or why I, of all men, should be chosen out to ride her? The whole thing is a riddle. However, my father won't so much object to my wearing the silk jacket once more, to oblige an old brother-officer.'

The captain alighted in excellent spirits. On his dressing-table, however, lay two or three letters, the sight of one of which, in its pale bluish envelope, checked the current of his complacency in full tide. A glance at the handwriting confirmed Jasper's worst suspicions.

'Wilkins it is!' he said, taking it up between his finger and thumb, as a naturalist might handle a small snake the non-venomous character of which was as yet imperfectly ascertained.

Amongst the paraphernalia of Captain Denzil's dressing-table, the ivory-backed brushes, the gold-stoppered jars and scent-bottles of red Bohemian glass, was a silver hunting-flask, the top of which being unscrewed became a silver drinking-cup. Jasper filled the cup twice and tossed off the cherry-brandy almost fiercely, as a hungry dog snaps up a morsel of meat. Then he opened the letter. This was short, and was signed 'Enoch Wilkins, Solicitor.' It is not, I am told, usual for solicitors-at-law to append 'Solicitor' to their names. But Mr Wilkins, whose clients were of a slippery and shifty sort, deemed it to his advantage to remind his correspondents of his profession.

The writer 'begged to remind Captain Denzil' that certain acceptances were now overdue, and could not, to the great regret of Mr Enoch Wilkins, be again renewed. This being the case, a prompt settlement of outstanding accounts became urgent; and Mr Wilkins, aware of the inconvenience and misunderstanding to which a correspondence by letter too often gave rise, desired a personal interview with Captain Jasper Denzil, and would therefore wait on him at Carbury Chase, or meet him, if preferred, at Peabworth or Exeter, on say July 28th, a day which Mr Enoch Wilkins could absent himself from his London office. Finally, Mr Wilkins requested a reply from Captain Denzil as to the trying-place that would best tally with the captain's engagements.

'July 28, eh?' said Jasper thoughtfully. 'Odd, isn't it, that my legal friend should have chosen the very day of the steeplechase! Well! If Jack's confidence is but justified by the result, I may come off victorious in one encounter, however I may do in the other.'

He then caught up a pen and proceeded to indite, painfully and slowly—as is the wont of so-called men of pleasure when compelled to write—an answer to the lawyer's letter, wherein he declared his willingness to await Mr Wilkins at the *De Vere Arms* at Peabworth, at four in the afternoon of July 28.

Having sealed and addressed the envelope, Jasper tilted into the silver top of the flask what little of the cherry-brandy the latter still held,

drank it off at a draught, and proceeded to dress for dinner; quite unaware that he was the unconscious instrument in the forging of another iron link in the dread chain from Fate's own anvil.

THE ORIGIN OF SOME SLANG PHRASES.

SLANG seems to have acquired a certain kind of vulgar popularity not only among the lower orders, but even in the higher ranks of our society. Try to banish it as we may from polite society and pretty mouths, it is a radical breed that defies proscription and seems to laugh at conventionality. If we regard grammar and style as representing the aristocracy of language, slang asserts itself as the necessary and important agent of a predominant proletariat, that refuses to be ignored. It is a power, though a vulgar power, in speech.

The word slang itself had a very low origin. It was derived from the Norman *slenggo-or*, slang, or insulting words; and this when connected with the Latin word *lingua* (tongue), signified the bad language our forefathers supposed the gipsies indulged in. It then became synonymous for every word used in a thief's vocabulary; but as both gipsies and thieves are not without a great deal of mother-wit, the word slang, originally their property, was borrowed from them by their respectable neighbours, and applied to all phrases of a pithy and familiar nature, whether coarse or refined, that expressed in one or a few brief words a definite unmistakable meaning, which brought a picture before the mind, and there fixed the impression it was desired to convey. When it was found that slang phrases could be so useful, then slang rose in the world, and from being the monopoly of thieves and gipsies, it passed into other and respectable hands, who made it subservient to their wants. Its claim to popularity rests on the fact that it meets an urgent want—that of enabling people to say a great deal in a few incisive words; and so long as man is busy and 'time is fleeting,' it will doubtless hold its own as a power in speech.

Having thus briefly established the reasons for its existence, it will not be uninteresting to trace a few popular slang phrases to their origin. Dr Brewer, in his interesting *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, enables us to do this. Our difficulty is to know where to begin—for a dictionary is a dictionary, and with two thousand facts to choose from, we feel rather like the ass among the bundles of hay, at a loss which to attack first; and the bundles at our command being so many and tempting, we feel no ordinary sympathy for the animal thus similarly tried. However we open the book at random, and determine to seize the first that comes, which happens to be, *You cannot say Es! to a goose*. How often have we relieved our feelings of irritation at the weakness of others by hurling this phrase at them! Had they only known its origin, they could have paid us back in our own coin, and made us feel very small indeed. But though we almost hesitate to arm them with a weapon which they may turn against ourselves, we must be conscientious, and when we have undertaken. The story is this: 'Do Ben Jonson the dramatist was introduced to a nobleman, the

peer was so struck with his homely appearance that he exclaimed: "What! you are Ben Jonson? Why, you look as if you could not say Bo! to a goose." "Bo!" exclaimed the witty dramatist, turning to the peer and making his bow.

From geese we pass on to cats, which are very emblematic in slang, and in the phrase *Letting the cat out of the bag* we are reminded of its thievish ancestry. "It was formerly a trick among country folks to substitute a cat for a sucking-pig, and bring it in a bag to market. If any green-horn chose to buy a pig in a poke—that is, a blind bargain without examining the contents of the bag—all very well; but if he opened the sack "he let the cat out of the bag," and the trick was discovered." And so the phrase passed into common use as applying to any one who let out a secret. *Who will bell the cat?* became another popular phrase, and is taken from the fable of the cunning old mouse who suggested that they should hang a bell round the cat's neck, so that due warning might be had of her approach. The idea was approved of by all the mice assembled; there was only one drawback to it: "Who was to hang the bell round the cat's neck?" Or in shorter words: "Who was to bell the cat?" Not one of them was found ready to run the risk of sacrificing his own life for the safety of the others, which is now the recognised meaning of the proverb. *Fighting like Kilkenny cats* is another slang simile, taken from a story that two cats once fought so ferociously in a saw-pit that they left nothing behind them but their tails—which story is an allegory, and supposed to represent two towns in Kilkenny that contended so 'stoutly about boundaries and rights to the end of the seventeenth century that they mutually impoverished each other.'

How common is the expression, *Oh! she is down in the dumps*—that is, out of spirits. This is a very ancient slang phrase, and is supposed to be derived from 'Dumpos king of Egypt, who built a pyramid and died of melancholy,' so that the thieves and the gypsies are not all to blame for having given us a few expressive words!

We next come upon a word full of pathetic meaning for many of us: it is the ghost that haunts us at Christmas-time, and pursues us more or less throughout the new year—it is the word *dun*. It is a word of consequence, for it is at once a verb and a noun, and is derived from the Saxon word *dunan*, to din or clamour. It owes its immortality—so tradition says—to having been the surname of one Joe Dun, a famous bailiff of Lincoln in the reign of Henry VII., who was so active and dexterous in collecting bad debts, that when any one became 'slow to pay,' the neighbours used to say: 'Dun him'; that is, send Dun after him.

Draw it mild and *Come it strong* have their origin in music, being the terms used by the leader of an orchestra when he wishes his violin-players to play loud or gently. From this they have passed into synonyms for exaggerators and boasters, who are requested either to moderate their statements or to astonish their audience.

The word *coach* in these days is a painfully familiar one, as parents know who have to employ tutors to assist their sons to swallow the regulation amount of 'eram' necessary for a competitive examination. The word is of university origin, and can boast of a logical etymology. It is a pun

upon the term 'getting on fast.' To get on fast you must take a coach; you cannot get on fast in learning without a private tutor—ergo, a private tutor is a coach. Another familiar word in university slang is 'a regular brick'; that is, a jolly good fellow; and how the simile is logically deduced is amusing enough. 'A brick is deep red, so a deep-read man is a brick. To read like a brick is to read until you are deep read. A deep-read man is, in university phrase, a "good man;" a good man is a "jolly fellow" with non-reading men; ergo, a jolly fellow is a brick.'

I have a bone to pick with you is a phrase that is uncomplimentary to the ladies at starting. It means, as is well known, having an unpleasant matter to settle with you; and this is the origin of the phrase. 'At the marriage banquets of the Sicilian poor, the bride's father, after the meal, used to hand the bridegroom a bone, saying: "Pick this bone; for you have taken in hand a much harder task." The gray mare is the better horse comes well after this last aspersion upon the fair sex, to shew that woman is paramount. The origin of this proverb was that a man wished to buy a horse, but his wife took a fancy to a gray mare, and so pertinaciously insisted that the gray mare was the better horse, that her husband was obliged to yield the point. But then no doubt he saw that she was right in the end, and in all probability boasted afterwards of his selection.

To be among the gods at a theatre is a common phrase applied to those who are seated near the ceiling, which in most theatres is generally painted blue, to represent the sky, and inhabited by rosy-faced Cupids sitting on clouds.

The proverb, *Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones*, dates back to the Union of England and Scotland, at which time London was inundated with Scotchmen. This did not please the Duke of Buckingham, who organised a movement against them, and parties formed, who went about nightly to break their windows. In retaliation, a party of Scotchmen smashed the windows of the Duke's mansion, which stood in St Martin's Fields, and had so many windows that it went by the name of the Glass House. The Duke appealed to the king, who replied: 'Steenie, Steenie, those who live in glass houses should be careful how they fling stones.'

First catch your hare is the result of a mistake. It was supposed to be in a cookery-book written by a certain Mrs Glasse, and was evidently caught hold of by some wag, who read it for, 'First scatch or scordge your hare'; that is, skin and trim it—an East Anglian word; or else, 'First scotch your hare before you jug it'; that is, cut it into small pieces, as the sentence as it is now quoted is nowhere in the book. But the wag was a clever one who gave it the precautionary turn, as the phrase has done good service in warning many to secure their prize before they arrange how to dispose of it.

When people talk of having nothing but 'common-sense,' they very often mean that they have good sense only; while the real meaning of the word lies in having the sense common to all five senses, or the point where the five senses meet, supposed to be the seat of the soul, where it judges what is presented to the senses, and decides the mode of action. Another common expression is, *I was scared out of my seven senses*. The origin of

this goes very far back. According to ancient teaching, the soul of man or his 'inward holy body' was compounded of the seven properties which were under the influence of the seven planets. Fire, animated; earth gave the sense of feeling; water, speech; air, taste; mist gave sight; flowers, hearing; and the south wind, smelling. Hence the seven senses were—animation, feeling, speech, taste, sight, hearing, smelling.

It is interesting to notice how by the progress of time words become convertible; thus *baron* has for long years been held as a title of honour, while that of *slave* applies to the lowest of menials. Now the real meaning of *baron* is *dolt*, and is derived from the Latin word *baro*, a thorough fool. It was a term applied to a serving-soldier in the first instance; gradually it rose in estimation, and military chiefs were styled barons; finally, lords appropriated the title, which is now one of high distinction. On the other hand, the word *slave* is derived from a Slavonic word *slav*, meaning illustrious, noble. But when the Slavs were conquered by the Romans, they were reduced by them to become 'heavers of wood and drawers of water.' *Idiot* is another word that originally had a much more respectable meaning than the one it now bears. It was used to distinguish private people from those who held office, or courted publicity in any form. Thus Jeremy Taylor says: 'Humility is a duty in great ones as well as in idiots' (or private persons). The term became corrupted at last into a synonym for incompetency, owing to the inability of idiots or private persons to take office.

A *snub* is an ill-mannered insult that needs *licking into shape*. The simile was taken from the cub of a bear, that is said to have no shape until it has been licked into form by its dam. The only difference lies in the process of licking being so much pleasanter for the animal than for the human cub, who finds nothing maternal about the cane that beats him into shape.

Before lead-pencils were common, chalk served the purpose of marking. Thus I *beat him by long chalks* refers to the ancient custom of scoring merit-marks in chalk. *Walk your chalks*, or get out of the way, is the corruption of an expression: 'Walk; you're chalked.' When lodgings were wanted in any town for the retinue of any royal personage, they were arbitrarily seized by the marshal and sergeant chamberlain; and the inhabitants were turned out and told to go, as their houses had been selected and were *chalked*. Hence the appropriateness of the peremptory dismissal: 'Walk; you're chalked.'

A 'bull' or blunder is a native of Ireland, and is derived from one Obadiah Bull, an Irish lawyer of London, in the reign of Henry VII, whose blunders were proverbial. 'The pope's bulls take their name from the capsule of the seal appended to the document. Subsequently, the seal was called the *bulle*, and then the document itself was given the name.

And now we come to a very pet word; what ladies would do without it, is hard to say, it is such a safety-valve to the feelings in moments of irritation. We have heard some gentlemen declare it was the ladies' way of swearing; but then there is nothing profane in the word *BOTHER*! It is a wholesome blessed word, however it is used, as it alludes of women being irritable without being very sinful! One looks out for its etymology with

interest, and finds it is of Hibernian origin, capable of a soothing inflection, as when bother becomes botheration, which is a magnified form of bother, and suggests an ebullition of feeling that might be serious but for the relieving expletive. 'Grose,' we are told, 'suggests *both-ers* as the derivation of the word, and defends his guess by the remark, that when two persons are talking at the same time, one on one side and one on the other, the person talked to is perplexed and annoyed.' We quite believe him, and feel inclined from experience to adopt his view of the derivation.

We all know what blarney is—that soft sweet speech in which the sons and daughters of Erin excel; those sugared words that are so pleasant to the ear, though false to the heart. Such speech is well named blarney, and carries us back to the hero that made it a household word. He was one 'Cormuck Macarthy, who held the castle of Blarney in 1602, and concluded an armistice with Carey, the Lord President, on condition of surrendering the fort to the English garrison. Day after day his lordship looked for the fulfilment of the terms, but received nothing except protocols and soft speeches, till he became the laughing-stock of Elizabeth's ministers and the dupe of the lord of Blarney.' The Blarney Stone is a triangular stone lowered from the castle about twenty feet from the top, containing on it the inscription: 'Cormuck Macarthy fortis me fieri fecit, A.D. 1446.' Whoever kisses this stone is supposed to be endowed with irresistible powers of persuasion.

We began this paper by likening ourselves to the ass among the bundles of hay, not knowing where to begin; so we have nibbled a little everywhere, and have had sufficient for to-day's meal, although we are greedy enough to regret many tit-bits left untasted from sheer incapacity to consume any more at one sitting.

FISHING FOR PEARLS.

PEARLS differ from any other kind of precious gems in requiring no aid from art to bring out their beauty. While diamonds and sapphires and rubies require to be cut and polished before they flash forth their lustrous light, pearls may be said to be ready-made wherever they are found.

Those who wear and admire them probably give little thought to the circumstances attending their production and collection; but there are few industries more interesting than that of 'fishing' for pearls, as practised in the most important pearl-producing districts. Pearls of an inferior quality to that of the true Oriental are found in a species of fresh-water mussel inhabiting Britain and other temperate countries; an important field for their production is being developed on the coasts of Queensland and Western Australia; and at the Cape of Good Hope specimens are occasionally found. But the great centres of the industry are the banks around the south and west coasts of the island of Ceylon, from which districts all the most celebrated pearls have been derived. The banks or *paars* there are under government supervision, and fishing is only allowed under the immediate inspection of the officials, who issue stringent regulations on the subject.

For some years the produce of the *paars* has been falling off, and a series of experiments has

recently been carried out, and is now in course of completion, with the object of discovering whether, instead of allowing them to be fished every year, an interval of one, two, or three years between each season will not afford a better opportunity to the bivalves to spat and develop into pearl-bearers.

The last great fishing took place during the month of March in 1877; and, as the results are said to have exceeded those of any previous season for many years past, a short account of the manner in which the operations were carried out, together with a review of the system adopted for protecting the beds from exhaustion, may be interesting.

In the first place, it will be well to remove a misapprehension which exists as to the identity of the so-called pearl-oyster. This mollusc is not an oyster properly so called, but a species of mussel, and is easily distinguished from an oyster by the squareness and length of the shells at the 'hinge.' Like the common mussel of our own shores, it attaches itself to stones and rocks by means of certain fine but strong cords or *byssus*, which it spins at will; and not, like the oyster, by a secretion of shell-matter. These cords are very tough when the animal is young, but decrease in strength as it increases in age, till at last they rot away altogether, leaving the creature at the mercy of tides and storms.

While the pearl-oyster is still young, and before it has finally attached itself to a suitable rock, it often breaks away from its anchorage; so that it not unfrequently happens that a pearl-bank well filled with oysters suddenly disappears altogether. Some authorities assert that the pearl-oyster has the faculty of casting its byssus and voluntarily migrating; but whether this is the fact or not, it is certain that the above circumstances demand the serious attention of the authorities, and have led to the adoption of a system of half-yearly inspection of the banks, in order to determine two important points, namely whether the young brood has forsaken its birthplace, or the full-grown oysters are, through old age, breaking away and being destroyed.

The duration of the life of the oyster is another necessary point to determine; and various suggestions have been made, with the double object of ascertaining the age of an oyster without the necessity of continually watching its growth, and of shewing when a bed is fit to be fished. The weight of the mollusc affords some clue to the elucidation of this problem, but there is an obstacle to the adoption of this method in the difficulty of accurately weighing a number of specimens in an open boat at sea, even if the scales and weights should be at hand. One of the government officials, however, has suggested a method of ascertaining the age of the mollusc by the weight of the shells, cleaned and dried with the animal removed. This can be done at any time; and a series of experiments conducted by him gives the following results. The shells of an oyster one year old, with the body of the animal removed, weigh four drachms; those of an oyster two years old weigh twelve drachms; three years old, nineteen drachms; and four years old, twenty-five drachms. This scale of weights will apply of course only to pearl-oysters from the Ceylon banks; as a difference in the food, in the composition of the water and soil, and the temperature in other parts of the world, would no doubt affect

the rate of growth and the deposit of the calcareous matter forming the shell. Empty shells have been found weighing as much as forty drachms, thus giving a probable age of about eight years.

The question arises, What are pearls? Are they a morbid concretion of matter produced in the endeavour to heal a wound or to cover some irritating body that cannot easily be ejected from the shells? Are they the result of a disease, or are they simply an over-production of the matter forming the shell of the creature? Whatever they are, it is only in the adult oyster that they are found of any size. The rate of growth in the size of a pearl cannot of course be actually ascertained; but by a series of averages, taken from the produce of a large number of oysters from the same bed in different years, it is proved that after the fourth year, the yield of pearls both in quantity and quality rapidly increases. It is in the hope of a bed of oysters which produces say five hundred rupees (£50) worth of pearls per thousand oysters one year, so improving as to yield double that value next year, that many a fine bank has been left to perish from the causes referred to above, as well as from the attacks of enemies or sickness.

The whelk has lately been discovered to be a serious enemy to the pearl-oyster, just as it is to the edible oyster of commerce; and a curious disease occasionally manifests itself among the inhabitants of the banks. The fatty portion of the animal, under which pearls are usually found, and which is usually of a pale cream colour, assumes a yellow tint, denoting sickness of some sort, the exact nature of which has not yet been ascertained.

Pearl-fishing is at the best only a gigantic lottery, the prizes in which bear a very small proportion to the blanks. But in this as in many other uncertain pursuits, hope always tells a flattering tale, and keeps awake the energies of thousands of interested operators. First there are the divers, who perform the actual operations of fishing for pearls. Arrayed in Nature's garb, and provided with a knife and a small bag of netting in which to collect the gathered oysters, and with a rope tied round their waists, and a heavy stone attached to their feet, they are let down into the water, taking first a deep breath, and remaining there till forced to rise again. Expert divers will remain beneath the water for sixty, ninety, and even a hundred and eighty seconds. This period they occupy in detaching the mussels from the rocks, a matter frequently of much difficulty. Those of very small size they do not attempt to gather, for, as we have shewn, the larger the shells the more chance of their containing a pearl. The native divers are able to guess at the age of the oyster by the resistance it offers; and, as explained above, the older the oyster the more easily it is detached, and the greater the chance of its producing a large pearl.

On banks not over thickly populated, there is barely time to gather half-a-dozen oysters at a dive—a dozen is an extra good haul; in more favourable circumstances from fifty to one hundred may be collected by one man. The diver then detaches the stone from his feet, gives a tug at the rope, and is rapidly hauled up; the stone, attached to another line, being afterwards pulled up for use again. His gleanings are then placed on board the

boat; and from it he descends again on another venture. It may be imagined that life among men who so overstrain their natural functions is very precarious; for though they are brought up to the practice from their boyhood, a diver seldom lives to see old age or even maturity.

The weather is an important factor in the calculation of the pearl-fisher. 'Pearl-fishing weather' is a proverb in Ceylon, and has much the same relation to the meteorological conditions of that island as 'harvesting weather' bears to our own climate. A light steady breeze from the north-east is the most favourable for fishing the *pears* on the south and west coasts of Ceylon, as the sea is sheltered by the island, enabling the boats to sail and manoeuvre easily. Sometimes the wind will suddenly shift, and a squall will drive the boats home with no little danger to the crews; or a heavy thunder-storm, such as only the tropics can produce, will fall like a bomb-shell upon the scene of the industry; and the wonder is that the frail habitations fitted up for the accommodation of the fishers and others are not literally washed away.

Besides the actual divers, there are the working crews of the boats, the men employed in 'washing' the oysters on shore, the carrying boats, the provision-merchants, purveyors of arrack and other liquors, bazaar owners, the petty *chetties* or traders in pearls, the large merchants who buy thousands of oysters with a nod of the head, the police—and they form no small proportion of the whole population—and other government officials.

The boats are manned with a crew of one or two men, and frequently a 'counter' to take reckoning of all the oysters brought up. The boats are usually worked over the ground in circles, being ranged in line some yards apart, and each taking a small circle and advancing gradually over a certain assigned area. Sometimes they are placed close together and advance in line across the bed. But before the boats are permitted to start, the beds, having been examined by government officials, are buoyed off, and no boat is allowed to go beyond the limits thus defined. When the number of boats entered is very large—and sometimes as many as five or six hundred collect together for the prosecution of the industry—they are placed in separate divisions of eighty to a hundred each, and lots are cast for the order in which the divisions shall proceed, each division taking a day or a tide in rotation.

For the accommodation of the large numbers of people brought temporarily together by the fishery, large villages, the houses of which are composed of bamboo, wood, furze, mud, and any light material, suddenly spring up along the seashore, the population being further increased by the arrival of the buyers and merchants. From China, Japan, and all parts of the East, connoisseurs in pearls and pearl-oysters are attracted to the scene of operation, and the activity and excitement are often intense. A sample of five or six thousand oysters is examined by the government, and from the results of this sample the sales proceed. The government take three-fourths of every boat-load brought in, and special officials are appointed to dispose of these shares as soon as possible and at the best possible price. A daily auction takes place, and the lots are knocked down to the highest bidder. The method of valuing is so much per thousand oysters, the prices ranging

from forty rupees (1.4) to one hundred and twenty rupees (1.12) per thousand.

The fishermen, who sell their own share on their own account, generally receive higher prices than those fetched by the government sales; for the small traders, buying by the dozen, naturally pay more dearly than if they bought several thousands at a time; besides, the fishers can afford to wait longer till a good offer occurs. Sometimes the *chetties* will buy a dozen at a time and open them, repeating their purchases dozen after dozen, in the hope of finding a good gem, which they either sell on the spot or take away with them into the interior. The occurrence of a good pearl always sends prices up; and a man may sell an unusually fine specimen for seven or eight hundred rupees, and see it change hands for twice and three times the amount.

The collection of so many thousand natives, with very rudimentary ideas of the laws of health and cleanliness, and with facilities for drinking arrack and other ardent liquors which are regularly to be met with on the shores of Ceylon as they are in the crowded fairs and race-courses of our own country, is often the cause of an outbreak of cholera, smallpox, or other zymotic disease. The greatest precautions are, however, taken to prevent such a catastrophe, and all cases of illness are at once isolated.

The operation of opening the pearl-oysters is also conducive to disease. To open each oyster when fresh would be a work of infinite labour; they are therefore packed together in large vessels called *ballans*, where, under the tropical heat, the animals soon die and putrefy, and the shells, gaping open, are easily washed and examined.

The greatest watchfulness has to be exercised over the natives employed in this work, where the owners do not perform the operation themselves. A pearl is very easily secreted either in the folds of the scanty dress, or in the mouth or ears, or even swallowed; and the Singhalese and indeed all the natives of the East are adepts in the art of thieving. To cheat the government out of their shares of the spoil, it is no unusual thing for the boatmen to throw large packages of oysters overboard, buoying them, so that they may be recovered under cover of darkness or on the last day of fishing, which is usually devoted to a general *sanjayan* or scramble. All boats, whether belonging to the authorised divisions or not, are then allowed to go out and keep what they can get.

These divers render essential service in discovering and reporting the existence of unrecorded rocks and shoals; and many a permanent record of their operations is left in the shape of a warning buoy, stationed to warn the navigator of a treacherous reef.

When, from the diminished daily results of the fishing, a sign is given that the bed is being exhausted, the order is given to stop fishing. The *sanjayan* over, the bed is deserted, save by the government launch appointed to remove the buyers which marked off the limits of the ground; the boats gradually make off as wind and weather permit, for their respective ports; the merchants pack up their purchases and take their departure for the great towns and cities; the government officials, having completed the records of the fishery, are gradually recalled; the temporary

huts are burnt to the ground; and the place assumes its normal state of peaceful repose, disturbed only, or rather intensified, by the presence of some wandering native bird, or by the occasional visit of a roaming elephant or jackal.

A PERILOUS POSITION.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

HAVING committed that murderous and suicidal act, Marmaduke Hesketh crept back to the coping and seated himself directly opposite me, with the opening of the chimney between. For a long while we gazed upon each other in silence, then with an exultant laugh he burst forth: 'You look agitated, my good sir, and yet I scarcely think you have taken in the full significance of the performance you have witnessed. Your intellect, unless I do you injustice, is somewhat obtuse. I will therefore make clear our position to you. You and I are alone upon this chimney-top, and for any particular choice in the matter, we might just as well be in our tombs. Neither of us will ever again tread the earth beneath; for all connection with it being, as you perceive, cut off, it can only be reached by a leap, upon which, I fancy, we shall not be inclined voluntarily to venture. Attempts, I have no doubt, will be made to rescue us; but they will of necessity only be of such a character as can be easily frustrated—and I shall frustrate them. My own life, I assure you, is perfectly valueless to me. I have brought you here to die, and to die of a slow lingering death, aggravated by mental torture. It is a felicity I have long anticipated, and I am not likely to allow myself to be balked of it.'

'O man, man!' I cried in mortal agony, 'are you indeed a human being, or a fiend in human shape?'

'A highly melodramatic question, upon my word,' he sneered. 'Nevertheless, with my wonted good breeding, I will endeavour to answer it. I am, I believe, gentle youth, a man; and yet, to own the truth, I have been impelled to my present course of action by certain sentiments popularly attributed to the Enemy of mankind—to wit, hate, jealousy, and despair. Yes, Mr Frederick Carleton, I hate you, and I have hated you from the very first hour of our acquaintances! Your death had been determined upon by me long before this plan for securing it, with an additional piquant flavour of enjoyment to myself, had suggested itself. You have not, as I have before hinted, a very active or capacious mind; but possibly your imagination may have been sufficiently stimulated by alarm to have already suggested to you that it was I who sent, or caused to be sent, that telegram which so opportunely prevented our friend Mr Middleton from accompanying us to this elevated and delightful spot. So far as I am aware, you will be relieved to hear that Captain Middleton is in perfect health.'

'Oh, can this horrible iniquity be permitted?' I groaned, raising my hands in frenzied suppi-

cation. 'Can this monster be actually permitted to carry out his fiendish purpose?'

'Curious, isn't it, the selfishness of the human heart?' meditated my tormentor, affecting to regard me with a studious air. 'This individual, I dare to aver, thinks that this act of mine is the very worst act ever committed. The individual in question has read, of course, of the painful deaths of thousands of his fellow-mortals by famine, pestilence, and war; of the sufferings of his own countrymen in the Black Hole of Calcutta; and of other terrible atrocities. But of all atrocities, the most atrocious and unequalled is the one that aims at depriving the world of his presence, of extinguishing the puny spark of his life, even though he has the consolation of knowing that his enemy will perish in his company! A very curious exhibition of selfishness indeed! Fie, fie, young man; I am ashamed of you!' With these words and with a sneer upon his lips, Mr Hesketh turned his face from me and fell into silence.

By this time the men who had worked the windlass, and several others engaged about the adjacent building, had gathered below, and were excitedly gesticulating and shouting. Of what they said I could not distinguish a syllable; but from their gestures, I gathered that they were inciting me to courage, and that they knew Mr Hesketh to be the cause of our calamitous situation—no doubt deeming him mad. And with the conviction that they so far comprehended the state of affairs, and would use endeavours to rescue me, hope sprang up in my breast. It was impossible, I thought, that I should be going to perish, to be cut off in this awful manner in the midst of youth and bliss. I, who loved and was beloved; who, that very afternoon, had been so full of ecstatic happiness, and had thought myself the happiest of God's creatures. No; it wasn't in the nature of things. It couldn't, couldn't, couldn't be! Repeating to myself this assurance, I watched with eager attention the further proceedings of the workmen below, and noted presently that several of them were running off in the direction of the town, whilst others were making across some fields by a footpath which led to Holm Court.

I was trying to think what means could be adopted for our salvation, when my cruel foe again addressed me. 'I hope, my friend,' he said, 'that you are not allowing yourself to be buoyed up by false hopes. The fools below (who no doubt consider me demented) think, perhaps, that they may succeed in helping you down again to *terra firma*—but you and I know better. By-the-bye, I wonder that you have not yet had the curiosity to inquire in what way you have earned my by no means impotent ill-will. Another proof, I fear, of defective phrenological development—Wonder and Acquisitiveness very small. However, you shall hear, if you will kindly favour me with your attention. I will give you in a few words the history of my life. At a very early age—don't let the fact distress you—I was left an orphan, and

was brought up by a maiden aunt, who, I fancy, was not very fond of boys. At anyrate she did not exhibit her fondness for me in such a manner as to inspire me with any return of affection, and at twenty-eight I had never known what it was to care for, or to be cared for by, any of my fellow-creatures. At that age I paid a first visit to my distant relative Mr Middleton, and saw his daughter, then about fifteen years old. With her I fell in love, as it is called; that is, I gave her the strong concentrated devotion of a wild passionate nature. I determined to marry her; but I was poor and her father was mercenary. I would not ruin my cause by speaking *then*, and in another week I was upon my way to America, bent, with iron purpose, upon making a fortune. Of my life in America I will not trouble you with an account, lest, mayhap, I might shock your virtue and sensibility. Suffice it to say, that during the seven years I remained in that country, I was by turns a gold-digger, a backwoodsman, and a merchant. During those seven years I heard regularly from Miss Middleton's maid, who received from me an annual honorarium for keeping me informed of all that concerned her mistress. At different times I had sent me by that young woman a lock of Clara's hair and a likeness, and by her I was constantly assured—false jade!—that Clara had as yet had no *affaire de cœur*. So, full of hope, I toiled on towards the accumulation of wealth, praying night and morning one simple prayer, namely, that my darling might be kept for me. And at length, with a fortune of one hundred thousand pounds, I returned to lay it and myself at the feet of her I loved—loved with a love which you, weak beardless boy, cannot even comprehend—a love which, compared with yours, is as the restless tossing ocean to a placid mill-pond, the fierce flames of a burning forest to the feeble flicker of a Lucifer-match! And what did I find when, full of joyous anticipation, I arrived at her father's house? Why, I found her for whose sake I had gone through incredible labours, for whose love I had yearned night and day for seven long years, engaged, and upon the very point of marriage with an empty-headed, aristocratic stripling, six months her junior! And worst of all, I found that she absolutely loved the noodle! And now, Mr Frederick Carleton, do you wonder that I determined to frustrate your marriage? Do you wonder that I hate you with a mortal hatred? Do you wonder that I regard my own life as of no more worth than a withered autumn leaf?

'O Hesketh, I am very, very sorry for you!' I said, as he ceased to speak; for his story and the agony of his face as he related it, had touched me. 'But you are mistaken in asserting *your* love to be superior to mine. It is inferior—infinately inferior. For I tell you, man, that if Clara had loved you, I would not have stirred a finger to injure you; and that rather than rend her heart, as it will be rent by the knowledge of what has happened, I would willingly suffer the cruel death you have designed for me, but which I feel confident will somehow be prevented.'

'You do, do you? Well, wait and see. I imagine your confidence will soon die out. And in the meantime, keep your snivelling pity to yourself. Don't speak another word to me unless you are spoken to!'

'I will not,' I replied; my compassion vanishing, and giving place to the horror with which I had previously regarded him. And averting my face from this dreadful companion, I awaited in my perilous position the issue of events. It declared itself thus. In what must in reality have been an incredibly short period, although to me it appeared of immense duration, a large crowd had collected around the chimney, and I presently saw a kite ascending from its midst. Slowly it rose into the air, higher and higher, borne by a gentle breeze in the direction of the chimney. The object of its flight I had readily guessed; but Mr Hesketh, to my extreme astonishment, did not appear to have noticed it. He had taken a cigar from his case, lighted it with a fusee, and was now calmly smoking with his eyes in a contrary direction. At length the kite was upon a level with us, and by a dexterous movement on the part of the man who held it, it fluttered to my feet. I stretched out my hand and seized it. A thrill of pleasure passed through my frame as I felt the string tugging from beneath, and knew that, though only by a line of twine, a communication was established between me and those who were planning my rescue.

But my gratification was not of long continuance. Glancing furtively the while at Mr Hesketh, I commenced rapidly to draw in the string, to which, as I guessed, a rope would be attached, wondering if it were really possible that he had not observed what was taking place. For a moment or two he smoked on in affected ignorance or unconcern, then knocking the ashes from his cigar, and replacing it in his mouth, he approached me, deliberately opened a penknife, and with a satirically polite, 'Allow me,' held out his hand for the string. At imminent danger of a fatal slip from my seat, I struggled to prevent the accomplishment of his purpose, but in vain; and having severed the twine with a sardonic laugh he retreated to his former position. A cry of exclamation rose from below, so loud and wrathful and prolonged, that I thought, as directed against himself, it must surely make my foe tremble. But no; his composure, real or pretended, remained, I saw, unruined.

And now, with what intensity of solicitude I waited for the next movement below! With what maddening impatience I watched the crowd continually augmenting, noted groups consulting together, saw people running hither and thither, gesticulating, looking upwards, shouting constantly but doing nothing! And with what unutterable misery I presently perceived on the outskirts of the crowd, a form, which by the instinct of love I could have picked out from a larger assembly and at a greater distance. Her arms stretched upwards, as though to lessen the dreadful gulf which divided us, Clara stood upon a little mound of debris; and by the agony of her attitude I could judge, though I could not distinguish her features, of the agony of her face. Mr Hesketh saw her too; for I heard him groan deeply, as though in pain, and glancing towards him, I perceived his eyes fixed in the direction where she stood. But from the

expression of his countenance, I knew well that the sight of her anguish had not shaken by one iota his pitiless resolve. Twilight fell, after a period of indefinite duration, shrouding Clara from my view; but not before I had seen her joined by a man, who had taken her in his arms and strained her to his bosom, and whom I conjectured to be Mr Middleton, returned from the fool's errand upon which he had been sent.

Upon the night of horror which succeeded I shall not dwell. All through its interminable hours, my horrid companion and I sat sleepless and silent, watching the red bonfires which blazed below, illuminating the base of the huge chimney and the figures of a considerable number of people who remained around it. By dawn the crowd had reassembled more numerous than upon the previous day, and again and again attempts were made to convey to me a rope by means of a kite, but only to be each time defeated by my powerful antagonist. Then one by one, other means of reaching us were tried; but all proved to be either infeasible in themselves or impracticable for lack of co-operation from above. By degrees every hope of rescue was extinguished in my breast, and I could only resolve to meet my fate like a man, and to pray that Clara might not suffer too keenly upon the consummation of the event. That she suffered keenly now, I could not avoid seeing, as with my despairing gaze riveted upon her, I faced the spot where with her father and mother she remained for most part of the day.

At length—it was getting towards the close of the afternoon, and nabe longer to bear the sight of my beloved one's torment—I turned away, and as my eyes fell upon the crowd, I noticed within it a movement of renewed excitement. I remarked, moreover, that Mr Hesketh had also observed it, for I saw him remove his cigar (he had been smoking almost unintermittingly since daybreak), and I heard him murmur: 'What are they up to now?' They were the first words he had spoken that day, and as they left his lips he started violently, for a bullet had whizzed past his ear, actually grazing it. The rifle had been discharged from behind him, and from the top of a wall belonging to the mill in process of building, and which stood quite separately and at some distance from the chimney.

'Oh, that's the game, is it?' exclaimed my reckless and now sullen enemy, speedily recovering his nonchalance of bearing. 'Well, that can easily be put a stop to. My dear fellow, I must seek protection beneath your wing. They won't shoot at me now.' And resuming his smoking, he offered me a cigar. 'Better take one,' he said sulkily, as I refused the weed with disgust. 'Smoking is a good preventive of hunger; and I daresay you are beginning to feel hungry.'

I was not hungry in the least; but I had for some hours been consumed with a terrible thirst; and as it presently occurred to me to produce an increase of saliva, by chewing a corner of my handkerchief, I felt for it in my pocket. But instead of my handkerchief, my hand lighted upon another object, cool and round, and in an instant my heart leaped into my throat. I managed, however, to remain motionless, though the blood tingled through my veins with excitement, and I was obliged to keep my face turned

from him, least the inspiration of hope upon it should be visible to my intended murderer. But he had fallen again into the sullen, brooding taciturnity which he had preserved all day, and did not even glance in my direction.

Thus we sat together till the slow hours had dragged themselves away, and the second night had fallen upon us in that awful situation. Then Mr Hesketh spoke again. 'Carleton,' he said, in a tone equally determined with any he had yet used, but not so expressive of hate and satire—'Carleton, I am tired of this, and I think you have now suffered enough. Your hair, I have observed, has turned quite gray. I shall therefore put an end to your torture and my own sooner than I had intended. To-morrow morning, as soon as the gaping crowd below has re-assembled in sufficient numbers to give zest to the exhibition of our agility, we will take a leap together into their arms. Meantime, I purpose to spend this last night of my existence in sleep, and with this object shall now retire to the opposite side of our airy castle. Do not, however, delude yourself with the hope, which I fancy I detect in your quickened breathing. I am a light sleeper, having long been accustomed to sleep with one eye open, for fear of wild Indians, or worse; and at a touch, or even a movement on your part I should awake.'

If ever I prayed in my life, I surely prayed upon that awful night when I saw Marmaduke Hesketh stretched out around the parapet of the chimney, with his head resting upon one arm, doubled under it for a pillow. And surely I may believe that it was in answer to that prayer, and to the prayers for my safety of one dearer to me than myself, that the sound sleep was sent which I presently perceived to have fallen upon him. Down below flickered the red bonfires, and faint from the distance came the sound of voices; but above that sound I heard the sweet music of heavy breathing. And now, with the utmost caution, I commenced to creep round towards my enemy's head—pausing at each step to listen if he still slept. Upon the success of the plan I was about to try depended my life, and in each moment of uncertainty which intervened until I was assured of that success, I lived an eternity. At last I was quite close, and he had not awaked! I drew from my pocket the bottle of chloroform which I had bought for Mrs Middleton—could it have been only two days ago!—and saturating my handkerchief with it, held it before his mouth. The breathing grew quieter. I pressed the handkerchief closer, and it became inaudible. I touched him, and he did not move. I grew bolder, and shook him, yet he did not awake. And now I was assailed with a strong temptation to hurl him over the chimney's side. I could have done it, I felt, easily; and I know the act would have been justified in the eyes of most people. But I resisted the temptation—for which I shall be thankful all my life—and carried out instead my original plan of disarming him as far as possible for the present, and waiting, until absolutely compelled to it in self-preservation, before I would attempt to cause his death. My method of disarming him was to bind together as firmly and tightly as I could his arms and legs, using for this purpose the two large balls of twine which Master Charlie had so urgently impressed upon me not to forget to

purchase for him. Ah, how little I had thought when selecting them to what a use they would be employed!

Having effected my purpose, and finding my foe still motionless and unconscious, I returned to my former position, and bending downwards, shouted with all my might to attract the attention of those below. But the effort was fruitless. I could not make myself heard, neither could I, in the darkness, be descried from below. It was only when the faint streaks of coming day began to appear in the horizon that my figure could be made out standing alone and defined against the gray sky; and then I could see that a rapid search was made inside and around the chimney for the body of the man who was supposed to have fallen thence; for in his recumbent position and hidden by the low parapet, my companion could not be discerned from beneath. At length I had the happiness of perceiving that the gesticulating figure above, wildly imploring aid, was recognised as mine; and then once more I saw ascending towards me on that early summer morning a white-winged messenger of salvation. And still my dreaded enemy slept. He slept on, when I had seized the kite, and whilst I drew in with eager rapidity the string. He slept on, whilst with growing excitement I hauled up a slender rope, and then a stouter one attached thereto, dropping them both into the interior of the chimney. He slept on whilst I pulled up, hand over hand, a strong iron chain, at the end of which, when it reached me, I found affixed a horizontal iron bar. And he still slept on whilst I passed this iron bar beneath my legs as a seat, and feeling the chain held firmly from below, grasped it with both hands and let myself over the side. Then, whether or not he slept I thought no more, as with closed eyes and heart full of thanksgiving, I felt myself gradually lowered against the chimney's smooth side, down, down, down, until in the end I touched the firm earth, saw a sea of faces gathering around me, heard a hubbub of congratulation, and sank into unconsciousness.

When I recovered from an illness which supervened, and which lasted several weeks, I found myself in the chamber I usually occupied when visiting at Holm Court, with Clara by my side, pale and worn with anxiety and watching. My nerves had been so unstrung by the mental shock I had endured, that for a long time no allusion was permitted in my presence to the events I have recorded. But eventually, on my insisting on being informed of Mr Hesketh's fate, I was told, that after waiting several hours for any movement on the part of the supposed madman, a brave bricklayer had volunteered to ascend the chimney by the same means as I had used in its descent, and had found him stone-dead, with his limbs bound, and in the position I had left him. By the administration of the chloroform I had unintentionally slain him.

Two words in conclusion. The unfortunate man was brought to the ground in the car in which, two days before, he had ascended with me intent upon his murderous purpose—a couple of mechanics having ascended by means of the chain and bar and readjusted the machinery. He was buried. And six months afterwards I was married—not as the gay, sprightly youth I had been before that awful adventure, but as a gray-headed,

prematurely aged man. But Clara loves me in spite of my white hairs, and Time with his healing hand is gradually effacing the mental scar, and restoring to me my youthful health and spirits.

COFFEYVILLE.

In the Western States of America, wherever the iron trail extends its path beyond the borders of civilisation, in quest of new fields for colonisation and commerce, it is accompanied in its track during construction by a shifting population of camp-followers—mostly the scum of society—who in their temporary resting-places often unwittingly sow the seeds of future thriving towns and cities. This result, however, is the exception rather than the rule, and only happens in cases where the natural advantages of the site selected are such as to induce far-seeing men of the right sort to remain and turn them to account. In most instances the existence of these wooden hamlets, or 'cities' as they are invariably called in the West, is but that of a butterfly, here to-day and gone to-morrow, lasting just as long as they serve to form depots for the labourers and employes while at work on that particular section of the road, and then passing on with them to the next resting-place. These railway creations are commonly called 'mushroom cities.'

The little town of Coffeyville in the southern part of Kansas, at the birth of which I chanced to be present, when it sprang up as if by magic from the surrounding prairie, may be taken as a fair example of the *modus operandi* of 'locating' a new 'city' on the western frontier. This place is somewhat unlike the general run of mushroom cities, because, without any peculiar advantages of situation, it has survived, almost in spite of itself, up to the present day, in consequence of its being for a long time the terminus of the Leavenworth, Lawrence, and Galveston Railroad, before legislation permitted that line to pass through the Indian territory. Though unlike in this respect, its birth and early life were similar in every particular. In all, the same extravagant excitement and speculation in corner lots temporarily prevail; the same scenes of lawlessness and bloodshed are enacted, and the usual number of lives sacrificed by knife or bullet in drunken brawls and gambling disputes. Usually the career of these temporary cities is nipped in the bud as soon as the railway has advanced far enough to require a fresh depot. Then if the present site does not possess sufficient qualifications for the town's growth to induce any one to remain, the wooden buildings are taken down, packed on the construction train, and transported to the next resting-place, for a repetition of the old scenes of feverish excitement and dissipation. After their removal, nothing remains to mark the late scene of busy life and revelry except two or three worthless old shanties, broken bottles and rubbish of every description, and torn and discoloured playing-cards and scraps of paper, which are whisked up and whirled far and wide in the eddies of the prairie

breezes. But I was nearly forgetting to mention the most important souvenirs invariably left behind by these advancing heralds of civilisation. These are the mounds which mark the final resting-places of those who 'died with their boots on' (as expressed on the frontier); who met men quicker than themselves at their own weapons—the revolver and the bowie-knife—and who were carelessly thrown into their lonely graves, there to remain as silent witnesses of lawless savagery.

Sometimes the embryo city, either from the natural advantages of its position, or from other causes (as in the case of Coffeyville), outlasts the ordinary life of the mushroom genus, and develops into a quiet-going market-town, which in time assumes such proportions and attracts such population as its trade with the surrounding settlers will support. Wood and water, as well as the course of the railroad, are the prime considerations which determine the site of a new township. As soon as that is settled upon, the silence and solitude of the lonely prairie are rudely invaded by a motley throng of saloon-keepers, speculators, gamblers, traders, and others, who make it their first business to establish their claim to a town-plot. This they do by planting a stake in whatever plot of ground they may select, and inscribing their name and date of entry upon it; this notice of occupation being respected quite as much as if the owner were standing guard over his property with a drawn revolver. In a short time the materials for building their temporary structures are brought along on the construction train or in wagons, and work begins in such earnest that it is a common occurrence to see them all erected and fronting the grass-covered main street of the place in less than twenty-four hours. In these buildings are sold such articles of merchandise as are most needed at this early stage of the city's existence, prominent amongst them being whisky, of the most villainous quality, commonly called 'forty rod whisky,' on account of its being supposed to render a man senseless before he can accomplish that distance after drinking it.

Now let me endeavour to describe some of the features peculiar to the budding life and progress of these pioneer settlements. First of all, there is the hastily improvised hotel, constructed partly of wood and partly of canvas. Here bed and board, such as they are, can be obtained for three or four dollars a day. The arrangements of the hotel are remarkable for their simplicity, and its accommodations unique in their discomfort. It is neither wind nor water tight, and one can only pray the elements to be propitious. Trestle-beds are packed as closely as possible in the sleeping-room, and when the supply of these is exhausted, the floor has to do duty for them. You cannot now any longer hope for the comfort of a bed to yourself, nor indeed at any place on the frontier. The most disagreeable effect of this want of separate accommodation is the unpleasant feeling of anxiety occasioned as to what kind of a man your partner for the night may be; whether he will come to bed tipsy or sober, and whether the revolver which he puts under his pillow is at full or half cock.

On rising in the morning you look for a place to

perform your ablutions, and find that the lavatory is nothing more than a deal plank in rear of the dining-room, in the open air. It is furnished with a tin basin, securely fastened by a chain to a staple in the side of the building, a very dirty looking towel on a roller, and a small piece of yellow soap, which seems likely to do duty during the rise and fall of many a future mushroom city, for by no amount of ingenuity can any suds be possibly coaxed out of it. There is also a looking-glass, or rather a piece of one, which it makes you nervous to look in; and a veteran comb minus several teeth, which nevertheless is considered one of the most valuable articles in the place, and to avoid appropriation, is also fastened to the side of the house by a chain. Having availed yourself of these luxurious surroundings, you go to breakfast, and find the ubiquitous hot biscuits, tough thin beef-steaks, and poor coffee awaiting you. Several outsiders, besides those who are staying at the house, drop in for this meal, each one putting his pistol on the table at the side of his plate; and breakfast is rapidly despatched under a sort of armed neutrality, which makes a timid man, now to the thing, fearful of breaking it by even asking his next-door neighbour to pass the salt.

Outside, on chairs tilted back against the side of the house, are two or three frontier doctors, their ears on the alert to catch the sounds of strife, which may possibly betoken the need of their healing art. One or two lawyers and real-estate men are also there, with plans of the city already mapped out, eager to buy or sell, though at very different prices. Besides these, there are numerous individuals of the nondescript class known as 'bummers,' whose business at this or any other place is a mystery, but who seem to rub along somehow or other, and at this minute are retailing the latest bar-room 'shooting scrape,' and discussing the city's chances as if they had great interests at stake.

All this time the hubbub and excitement in the main street are ever increasing. If you walk down it, you will find one or two drug stores, an ironmongery establishment, a store where anything can be obtained from a sombrero to a set of harness, and a butcher's shop. With these exceptions, every building is a bar-room or gambling-house. In these, the games of faro, keno, roulette, and poker are in full swing day and night, the dealers at the first-named game being relieved when tired, or when the cards seem to be persistently running against them. The professional gamblers who frequent these scenes can be easily recognised. They are generally the best-dressed men in the place, by which I mean that they wear black cloth clothes and a diamond solitaire in their shirt front, which places them in bold relief against the surrounding roughly clad assemblage. These professional gamblers are usually styled 'sporting men' or 'sports.' They have an expression in their faces peculiar to the fraternity—a watchful, calculating, cruel look, and an impassive countenance carefully trained not to betray any signs of their feelings. When off duty, if we may so express it, some of them are gentlemanly, pleasant enough companions, who might really be trusted; but on duty they become again the unscrupulous gambler, ready to fleece his friend, by fair play or foul, without a particle of compunction. They are ever on the *qui vive* with their weapons, although not

quarrelsome; nor do they drink much, are coolly brave and determined as well as excellent shots, and have not much belief in anything here or, we fear, hereafter.

In the distances are the gangs of labourers, mostly Irish, hard at work on the railroad, who are herded together at night in a movable frame boarding-house, where they are also fed by a contractor with the railway company. Here and there are travelling carpenters busily employed in hammering together a few pieces of timber, to be placed on lots already claimed, but which are required to present some evidence of the owner's intention to build, so as to preserve his title, and prevent the claim from being 'jumped.' These rough-and-ready mechanics are in great request, and make plenty of money while the early excitement is prevailing; but few of them are able to withstand the attractions of the gambling resorts, where in the long-run they are sure to deposit all their earnings. The ubiquitous quack doctor is also here with his painted chariot and fantastically attired attendant, and is the centre of an admiring crowd, to whom he sings (or rather shouts) in comic rhyme the praises of his 'Universal Heal All' or 'Magic Aque Cure.' Beware of the rascal, for likely enough one of his pockets is full of counterfeit change, with which he will palm off on the unwary and innocent-looking customer. Loitering about at the various bar-room doors are numerous specimens of the western border-men—hunters and scouts—tall, angular, bony-looking fellows, with bronzed complexions, hair trailing over their shoulders, and a brace of revolvers strapped round their waists. They will probably hang about the new town until they have gambled their money away, when they will return to their home, the open prairie, where no finer or more trustworthy fellows can be found.

See yonder primitive ferry-boat crossing the narrow but deep little river Verdigris. Its owner you may be sure will reap a rich harvest from his venture, as it is the only practicable crossing-point on the road which leads to Coffeyville from the more settled districts. This ferry is one of the fast disappearing remnants of the rude old frontier contrivances for crossing a creek. It is a kind of flat-bottomed boat, capable of transporting one wagon at a time, and is hauled to and fro by a rope fastened round the trunk of a tree on each bank of the river. Over this ferry, passengers and vehicles are continually crossing, and as they arrive at their destination, fresh wooden buildings are run up with inconceivable rapidity. And when the mushroom city's future is assured by undoubted local advantages the work of building correspondingly increases with the most exaggerated ideas of the future town's importance, until a natural reaction sets in to restore the general equilibrium. Upon my departure from Coffeyville, just two weeks after the first building was erected, it boasted some two hundred houses, a three-story hotel completed to its second story, a railroad station, and stores filled with merchandise, farming implements, and provisions of all kinds.

In the wonderful growth of these mushroom cities, as in all other matters of business and speculation, are the pushing and go-ahead traits of the American character (the infection of which appears to be soon caught by naturalised foreigners) most strikingly exemplified. Thus are towns

and villages daily bursting into life in the track of every newly constructed railway, and gradually driving the wild Indian and the buffalo farther and farther towards the setting sun and extinction.

THE BEAVERS OF BUTE.

VARIOUS newspapers have lately informed us that the Marquis of Bute, with tasteful munificence, has made a gallant and successful attempt to acclimatise beavers on his estate in the island of Bute, a few miles from Rothesay. None but a nobleman with extensive grounds comprehending a wood with an adjacent stream and other accessories, could enter hopefully on an adventure of this kind; nor can we omit the consideration of means for guarding the animals against the acquisitive intrusion of poachers, to say nothing of hosts of holiday visitors, who are not usually very particular in satisfying their curiosity. So far, as we understand, there has been little to complain of. The beavers introduced have been allowed to conduct their engineering operations un molested, and to increase in numbers. The best account we have seen of this somewhat remarkable undertaking is that given in a late number of the *Daily Telegraph*, which we condense as follows for the amusement of our readers.

'In a solitary pine-wood, a space of ground has been so carefully walled in by a ring-fence that beavers could not possibly escape from the circle. Through the little park thus formed runs a small mountain stream, and the domain inclosed ought to constitute, when its natural advantages are taken into account, a beaver's paradise. Left to themselves, the beavers have entirely altered the appearance of the stream. They have built across it no fewer than three dams. The lowest of these is the largest and most firmly constructed, as if the little engineers had been aware that it would have to support the strongest pressure of water. To make it, large boughs and whole trunks of trees have been cut down, thrown across the stream, wattled with mud, and otherwise secured. The dam thus erected preserves the water above it at a regular height; and in the pool which they have fashioned in this ingenious method the beavers have built their hut. The structure, which is composed of boughs, driftwood, mud, and stones, resembles nothing so much as a large thrush's nest turned upside down; while inside it is excavated with runs, holes, and quarries made for themselves by Lord Bute's little tenants for the purposes of safety and concealment. With their sharp chisel-like teeth, the small animals have cut down not a few of the trees in what we may call their beavary. Their mode of procedure is simple. They first gnaw a wedge-shaped gap into one side of the tree, and they then attack the other side and gnaw the remaining half, by which alone the trunk is held upright. Their intelligence is such that the tree usually falls in the exact direction in which they wish it to go, and that is generally across the current. Should it, however, prove too heavy, or should it fall too far from the water, they will saw it into pieces with their teeth and roll it for

themselves to its proper destination. Left to their own devices, the beavers have bred and multiplied. Originally they consisted of but two pairs, which had for some time dwelt in the Zoological Gardens. They have, however, added to their numbers, and according to the latest reports, there are supposed to be something like a hundred of them.

'The beaver is one of the few animals still remaining from which man can learn a lesson of engineering. Of all natural artificers, the beaver is confessedly the most ingenious. It is a large species of water-rat, about the size of a tame rabbit; and its enemies, such as the fox, the wolverine, and the various other small carnivorous inhabitants of the river's bank, must always have pressed it sorely. Necessity is the mother of invention, and in the great natural struggle for existence, the faculties of the beaver became sharpened. It gave up burrowing in the bank, like its little congener the water-rat, and took to dwelling upon islands. When a natural island was not ready to hand, it would construct itself an artificial one; and such beavers as took to artificial islands must, like those early specimens of the human race who dwelt in houses founded upon piles driven into the lake's bed, have soon discovered the necessity of preserving round about them a permanent water-level. This is of course the one object of the beaver's dam. Around the little fortress which the beaver makes for himself in the middle of a stream, the water is kept at a uniform and regular height by the action of the artificial barrier below. The entrance to the house is beneath the surface, and from the bank the wolverine and the fox watch with disgust their desired prey swimming comfortably round about his habitation. In winter, when the river is frozen over, the beaver's house is no doubt open to the attacks of his enemies; but it is then itself frozen into a solid mass of masonry, as hard as the strongest Portland cement, and the little rodent inside is in a position securely to defy even the strong claws of the wolverine. Lord Bute's beavers have built themselves, as yet, but one of these river fortresses. In a full-sized North American beaver colony, however, there will be a dozen, a couple of dozen, and sometimes even a hundred or more beaver nests projecting from the surface of the stream, while the dam will be as large and strong as an English mill-weir. Should Lord Bute's beavers multiply, they will require more ground, and there is really no reason why they should not be re-acclimatised on the island of Bute. The experiment would be interesting, although, since the introduction of silk hats, the skin of the beaver has long ceased to have much commercial value.' Still, the fur of the beaver may be made available as a trimming for ladies' winter dresses and otherwise.

'Originally the beaver was a British animal, and the isle of Bute was as much its native home as the banks of the Mackenzie. It is still to be found here and there along the unfrequented tributaries of the Rhone, the Danube, and the Weser. The beaver [if unmolested] would thrive admirably on our Scotch rivers. The kangaroo would make a magnificent addition to our larger parks and open waste lands. Indeed the Duke of Marlborough has at Blenheim a herd of kangaroos which have flourished for some years past as vigorously, and prospered as remarkably, as the beavers on the

isle of Bute. There are not many animals, it is true, which could be with advantage introduced, or for which space could be afforded. But this fact is in itself an additional reason for persevering in every attempt at all likely to end in anything short of absolute failure. In the case of the beaver, the chief objection to him is that he destroys valuable trees by cutting them down for his engineering purposes. This is no doubt the case; but, on the other hand, a beaver, if driven to extremities, will construct both his dam and his dwelling of mud, stones, and stray débris.' The writer of the article adds: 'It is a question whether beaver-farming might not be carried on at a profit in the wilds of Scotland, as ostrich-farming is at the Cape. From this particular point of view, indeed, Lord Bute's experiment is more interesting than attempts at acclimatisation can usually claim to be considered.'

We trust that nothing will occur to mar the undertaking, or to discourage others who have the means from cultivating the beaver in suitable situations throughout the United Kingdom. In the meanwhile, the Marquis of Bute deserves thanks for his enterprise.

LINES WRITTEN AFTER PERUSING A LETTER WRITTEN BY ROBERT BURNS.

Only a scrap of paper, old and worn,
He wrote one day, when in a mood forlorn;
Few are the words, and simply do they stand,
Yet thrill us—they were written by his hand.

His hand had penned these words on which we gaze;
The hand that gave the 'Daisy' sweetest praise;
That held a sting for falsehood, and for pride,
And dared raise *manhood* o'er all else beside.

His eyes looked down upon that faded page—
The eyes that had the vision of the sage;
The eyes that did with wit and laughter glow,
Yet had a tear of sympathy with woe.

His heart impelled these kind words to a friend—
That full, true heart fast throbbing to its end.
In life neglected, what avails it now,
That men would wreath the laurel round his brow?

Ah, little dreamed he, as he wrote these lines,
That hearts would beat, to look upon the signs
So careless traced one day, in mood forlorn,
But treasured now, as by the poet born.

H. K. W.

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SOCIABLE AND UNSOCIABLE.

THE pleasures of social intercourse are amongst the best and truest enjoyments in which we can participate—the desire for the friendship of others is more or less inherent in human nature. There are nevertheless thousands upon thousands who are surrounded by every opportunity for realising these pleasures, and who yet fail to benefit by their influence, either for temporary and healthy pastime, or for permanent good. Most people have doubtless many amongst their circle of acquaintance who are easily distinguished from others by the term ‘unsociable.’ It would, however, be both unfair and incorrect to estimate that a large proportion of a given number of people have a decided objection to and shun all society. The habitually unsociable people are frequently those who would readily confess to a liking for society, but who do not enter into it on account of the various and numerous obstacles which, they will tell you, are in the way. It is not so much on account of an innate and acknowledged indisposition for social intercourse that the saying, ‘Some folk are as unsociable as milestones,’ is proverbially correct, as that many barriers have been erected by the suspicious imaginations of those concerned. People are often heard to complain of the unsociability of others; but it is not unusual that the very people who adopt this standpoint are those who, at the least approach from others, retire almost entirely within their insignificant individuality, and assume a reserve of manner and constrained mode of conversation, that of itself forbids any attempt to cultivate their acquaintance. Something like a hedgehog which, should you happen to catch sight of it, instead of making friends, rolls itself up into a ball, and shews off its bristles to the best advantage.

Perhaps nothing constitutes so great a hindrance to what may be termed natural and unadulterated social intercourse as the unnatural appearance which many folk strive to put upon themselves and their belongings for the benefit of the objects

of their acquaintance. For the entertainment of their visitors, some good folk will change, as far as they possibly can, the entire face and features of their houses and themselves—in short, for the time being they seem to be somebody else—they go to great pains to make things unreal. On such show-occasions a profusion of apologies is sometimes showered upon the unhappy and disappointed guests; they are begged to excuse the unceremonious and very ordinary preparation made for their reception and entertainment; whilst it is apparent that every available resource has been utilised to make an imposing appearance. It was, we think, John Wesley, who having been invited out to dine, was asked, soon after his arrival at the house of the host, to excuse the fact that no preparation had been made. ‘Then,’ replied he rather sharply, ‘there ought to have been;’ and without waiting to see whether there was reason for such an apology, left the house forthwith.

Feelings of rivalry and jealousy, and the existence of an ultra spirit of caste, are responsible for much of the unsociability which prevails. Mr and Mrs Jones do not fraternise with Mr and Mrs Smith, who may live next door, because they, Mr and Mrs Jones, have concluded that they have ascended two or three more rounds of the ladder of social status. It is quite probable, moreover, that Mr and Mrs Smith may be duly impressed with precisely the same sense of superiority. Mr Jenkins does not wish to be patronised, and therefore cares not to cultivate the acquaintance of Mr Jones. Mr Jones having a paramount consciousness of his pre-eminence, would deem it undignified to be friendly with Mr Jenkins. Thus people sit in judgment upon themselves and other people, and form what they deem a sound opinion as to the disposition of others without ever having had the smallest opportunity of arriving at an accurate estimate. Imagination, hearsay, and the impressions derived from mere appearance at first sight, are often the sole materials employed in producing what is intended to pass as a detailed character-photograph. The estimates thus formed

are frequently circulated as genuine and reliable in every particular; and yet there may be as much difference between such estimates and the truth, as between a genuine and a base coin of the realm. The estimate which may be given you by one man of another is only reliable in so far as he is capable and has had the opportunities of forming an accurate judgment.

As the tenor of a man's life will to some extent be the reflection of his associations, it is essential that some discrimination be employed. But a man may be sociable and yet avoid careless promiscuous friendships. By the same rule that you cannot touch pitch without being defiled, neither can you have the friendship of sensible men and true, without profit. Nor need a sociable man eschew the duties and comforts of home-life. The association with friends, at home, may be made to take the place of association with mere acquaintances, sometimes of a questionable sort, abroad; and hence home may be made more homely.

The plea is sometimes advanced, 'Oh, we cannot afford to have company.' Here is where a great mistake is made. Surely we should not measure the value of our friendships on the basis of a knife-and-fork calculation! The friendship which is measured by the amount of money expended on it is surely worth little. It is not so much the good dinner society which we would advocate, as the propagation of simple and genuine friendships. Formal parties and dinners-out are by reason of modern usages acknowledged to be for the most part dreary affairs, both for the givers and the guests. Dinners got up for display, arranged with an object, invitations given for sundry reasons—to the man, for instance, whose only qualification as a guest may be his ability to be a source of entertainment; or to the titled gentleman and lady whose style and title shall grace the list in the newspaper columns. This amongst the upper ten thousand may be perhaps regarded as a necessary evil. Such state ceremonies have become fashionable amongst what has come to be popularly designated the *élite* of society.

We especially refer, however, to the sociable traits of the great middle class, amongst whom a large dinner-party scheme is neither practicable nor desirable, but to whom the more frequent exchange of civilities with their neighbours would be a boon. But the way is frequently barred by the comparisons which are made. The ladies are generally desirous that the furniture of their houses should not compare unfavourably with that in the houses of those with whom they may be intimate. A source of the greatest concern is it if they have not Brussels carpet as good and as new as that of their neighbours. Then their furniture it may be is in green rep, that of their friends in crimson plush. Further anxieties are created as to plate, the size, style, and number of servants, and a dozen other considerations of a kindred sort. This everlasting contest to keep up appearances is at once the bane of our tempers and our pockets. It is the main thing on which the unreality of our time is fed, and upon which it thrives so well. Whatever may be the real impediment to sociability, we ourselves, while fostering the evil, uncharitably and inconsistently plead that the unsociable tendency exists more in others than ourselves!

Were there an utter absence of opportunity for

benefiting by the society of others, the fact would be deemed a hardship and a misfortune; and yet there are plenty of individuals who live in crowded cities but are the most lonely of beings. Not only are they never seen to speak to others, but apparently never even see them; the social faculties are thus rarely called into play, and are left to rust out. What do such men lose as the result of this isolation? Their knowledge of the best side of human nature is at a low ebb; while on the other hand the association with and knowledge of those around us teach us not only to misjudge others less, but to know ourselves better; and hence there comes a development and expansion of our sympathies. More freedom of intercourse must tend not only to increase our pleasures but to alleviate our troubles, for as we see that others have their 'ups' and 'downs,' we learn to look upon our own as less burdensome. The man who neither sees, hears, nor participates in anything beyond his own immediate surroundings, can know little or nothing beyond the narrow boundary of his own individuality—a very circumscribed sphere to live and work in, certainly. People often need friends who, under given circumstances, will afford the benefit of their own experience. The person whose only acquaintance is himself, complains of the hardness of his lot, and whilst estimating what difference he imagines the cultivation of friendships would make to his pockets, fails to estimate what he would gain by the sympathy and goodwill of others, and how his dreary path would be brightened by less isolation.

There is, however, an inborn craving in most people for society of some kind, though occasionally it is sought for in directions which are not beneficial in their tendency; and this, we fear, is the result of the swarm of conventionalities which, for the most part, surround the social life of our day, some healthy counteraction of which—especially in the interests of the young—would be welcome.

Happily the habits of isolation and unsociability are more prevalent in some places than in others. Those who have travelled most will readily admit that they have frequently found themselves amongst a circle of individuals whose freedom from conventionalities, and whose unconstrained and hearty mode of intercourse, made them forget for the time being that they were in the company of strangers. It is possible that some readers of these words may almost shudder at the idea of such freedom, such a want of decorum on the part of people who had never met before, and had not gone through the formality of a proper introduction. And yet there may be decorum without painful fastidiousness. Who has not met with unsociable railway travellers, some in whose company he has been for many weary hours, and with whom he may have succeeded, after supreme effort, in breaking the ice, only to receive a solitary monosyllable in response! Such an experience is certainly not the rule, for sometimes we meet with those, the incessant wag of whose tongue may be such as to compel us to leave unread both our newspaper and any favourite book that we may have promised ourselves to get through. And yet it is well on such occasions to go on the principle of give and take. Anything rather than the company of an individual who looks suspiciously at you should you be venture-

some enough to express to him an opinion on so commonplace a topic as the state of the weather.

As a valuable element in connection with our social life, music does not occupy the position which it might and ought to do. The rapid growth during recent years of a knowledge of this charming solace is out of all proportion to the extent of its social enjoyment. It is unfortunately too often treated as a mere accomplishment. The friendly and informal musical parties such as were enjoyed years ago, do not receive much encouragement. It is of course indisputable that as a concert-giving power, rapid strides have been made in music; but what we contend for is the propagation of home harmony; the social glee, the favourite ballad, the instrumental quartette, with no objection to an occasional sonata for the pianoforte.

It is no less amusing than disagreeable to see so many otherwise worthy people possessed of such a paramount sense of gentility and importance as to make themselves and their surroundings uncomfortable, and often miserable. The great desideratum is that people should appear more like themselves than somebody else. We hear and read a good many sermons on 'Morality'; but, excellent in their way as these are, a series of lectures on 'Reality' are quite as necessary.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER IX.—SIR SYKES'S WARD.

THERE may be pleasanter positions in life than that of a dependant, especially when the claim to make one of the household rests on conditions which it is impossible to define. The governess, who is so often held up by moralists as an object for our conventional pity, needs not, surely, to forfeit her self-respect, inasmuch as she earns her salary and its contingent benefits by honest labour. The companion too gives valuable consideration in the shape of a perpetual offering up of her own time, tastes, and wishes, for her pay and maintenance. There are others sometimes however, kindred strangers within the rich man's gates, who have no ostensible tasks to perform, who cannot give monthly or quarterly notice and go away, and yet whose bread is sometimes made very bitter to them—white slaves who get no compassion from the world at large.

Miss Willis at Carbery Chase was oddly situated. An orphan, she found herself domiciled amongst those who were allied to her neither by blood nor by the still more tenacious tie of common and early associations. She was exempt of course under that roof from many of the annoyances which fall to the lot of the motherless elsewhere. There was no domineering mistress of the house to resent every attention shewn to the interloper as something deducted from the rightful due of her own matchless girls; no niggard to grudge her every meal of which she partook at the stinted family table; or tyrant to pile upon her submissive shoulders the never-ending load of petty cares, which some genteel drudges perform unthanked.

At Carbery there was plenty and to spare. Sir

Sykes was a gentleman bland and courteous; the girls as kind good girls as could easily be met with; and the servants sufficiently well trained to take their cue from their employers, and to be civil to one who was smiled on by the higher powers. Yet a sensitive young lady in the position which Sir Sykes's ward now occupied, might well have been excused if her heart at times was somewhat heavy. All her old habits of life had been in a moment uprooted. She had been suddenly transferred from familiar scenes and people whose ways she understood, to a country every feature of which must have been strange and new to her. Under the circumstances and in spite of the good-nature of those around her, it is not surprising if Ruth Willis at times looked sad and pensive.

'You cannot think how wonderful it seemed to me at first,' she said one day to the younger Miss Denzil, 'not to hear the drums beat tattoo at sundown, or how often I have started from my pillow in the early morning, fancying that I heard again the bugles sounding for the parade. Then the trumpeting of the elephants beside the tank, and the shrill voices of the dusky children at play beneath the peepul trees, and all the sights and sounds about my old home in India—I can't forget them yet.'

Blanche was sympathetic; but she felt rather than reasoned that the grief for a father's loss, the regrets for friends abruptly quitted and a mode of life abandoned, could not be assuaged merely by a kiss and a kind word. Yet it was evident that Ruth was by no means disposed to play the part of a kill-joy in the house beneath whose roof she was now established, or to enact the martyr. Her manner was very soft and gentle, not obtrusively sad or unduly deferential, but that of one who sincerely wishes to please. She had a way of bending her will as it were to that of those with whom she now associated, which was really very pretty and graceful, and harmonised well with the modest drooping of her eyelids when she spoke. There were times (so her ill-wishers said, the latter being some of those vigilant critics who take our wage and wear our livery, or it may be caps and aprons and cotton prints such as we sanction, but who are not always too lenient censors of our conduct) when her whole face seemed to change its expression by the mere opening of the fine dark eyes fraught with a singular look, which the same critics averred to be that of ill-temper. But if Miss Willis had not, as Lucy and Blanche Denzil believed her to have, the temper of a lamb, it must be admitted that she was capable of very great self-restraint, since in general conversation she was only too ready to acquiesce with the opinions of others. Jasper had observed the singular brightening of Ruth's eyes sometimes, when she turned them on Sir Sykes, but never towards himself; while his unsuspecting sisters saw no peculiarity in the bearing of the stranger whom they had learned to like.

'I could really believe,' said Jasper to himself more than once, 'that my father is afraid of that girl—and no wonder after all!' he added, after a moment's reflection. Certainly Sir Sykes did appear somewhat over-anxious that his ward should be happy and comfortable at Carbery, that her tastes should be studied, and her inclinations consulted. Yet he never seemed at ease in her company, and always escaped from her presence as early as politeness permitted; so that his own daughters set down his behaviour as merely prompted by an over-strained sense of hospitality.

There was a fascination in the guest's bearing and conversation, to which even Jasper, with all his predisposition to dislike her, could not but succumb. No great talker, Miss Willis had the power, somehow, of making what she did say more effective than what fell from other lips than hers. What this art or this gift might be, Jasper Denzil, who was no stranger to women and their ways, could not divine. The girl's voice was rich though low, and admirably modulated, although of music, as she frankly confessed, she knew nothing whatever. And her eyes—the one redeeming feature of a plain pale face—could flash and glitter with wondrously changing play of light; eyes and voice and words all blending together to convey the expression which their owner desired that they should impart.

There was one person to whom the baronet's ward appeared in the light of an enigma, and this was Lord Harrogate, himself a frequent visitor at the home of the Denzils, between whose family and his own there was indeed some kind of connection. He had given up as preposterous the idea that he had ever seen Miss Willis before. That was of course erroneous, and he must have been the dupe of a fancied resemblance. But he was sufficiently quick-sighted to perceive, what was apparent neither to his sisters nor to Jasper, nor to the Earl or Countess, that a strong sharply marked character was concealed behind the gentle half-bashful demeanour which it pleased Miss Willis to assume.

'I never saw the iron hand,' he thought to himself, 'so well hidden before by the velvet glove; but it's there for all that. Yonder girl looks capable of turning the whole family round her finger.'

Meanwhile Jasper at anyrate had other subjects for contemplation than were presented by a psychological study of the orphaned daughter of the late Major Willis, of the Honourable East India Company's Service. Gentlemen who own and gentlemen who are going to ride horses intended to win a race which had so suddenly swelled into importance as the forthcoming one at Pebworth, have need of frequent communication with one another. Jasper during the next ten days was often in his principal's company, sometimes at Pebworth, now and then at Exeter, when the routine of military duty held the other captain to his post.

In the interim, Captain Denzil could tell by the language of the newspapers which were the accredited organs of the turf, how considerable was the excitement evoked by the selection of Pebworth as a place where might be matched against one another some of the finest weight-carriers chronicled in the Stud Book. The wildest

rumours were afloat, and an April sky was not more changeable than were the odds, as reported from the headquarters of gambling, London and Liverpool. Sometimes the bookmakers were reported to be assured of triumph; sometimes it was hinted that the great betting firms would be severely hit, so unexpected would be the finish of the race.

'Why,' indignantly demanded one influential paper, 'should Pebworth be dragged into the daylight?' Nor were the other organs of the sporting press slow to swell the chorus of complaint that a cramped and hitherto unheard-of course, situated in an obscure nook of the far west, should be the arena for a struggle such as was anticipated. And then followed dark innuendos and vague suggestions as to the motives of the noble lord who owned The Smasher, and the scarcely less illustrious commoner to whom Brother to Highflyer appertained. During the period preceding the race, the most contradictory rumours were incessantly published with reference to the rival favourites. They were ill; they were well; they had met with all the accidents slight or serious to which the equine genus is liable. One of these important animals had a cough. The other was not quite sound of limb. Both had been overtrained. No. Their training was insufficient, and any nameless outsider could reach the winning-post before them. Once again both horses were in the very perfection of bloom and beauty, and would compete fairly for the prize.

Strange faces, some of which were not calculated to inspire confidence in those who had silver spoons in the pantry or linen drying on garden-hedge, began to appear at Pebworth and the parts adjacent. Lodgings were in such request that the meanest rooms were eagerly disputed at fancy prices, while inn and beershop drove a brisker trade than had been known since Pebworth had been disfranchised.

'Sad business, Denzil, this!' exclaimed Jack Podgers as he dashed into the private parlour of the *De Vera Arme*. 'Here's a private telegram, and here a special edition of a sporting paper. Both agree as to the facts.'

Jasper glanced at the telegram and at the paragraph. Yes. A most unfortunate accident, due to the carelessness of a porter, had occurred to Brother to Highflyer, just as that noble horse was being led from his box to the platform. Mr Splint, the eminent veterinary surgeon, summoned in hot haste, had examined the off fore-leg, and had expressed a positive opinion; in deference to which Mr John Knavesmire the trainer and Mr Wylie the owner had reluctantly decided to withdraw the name of Brother to Highflyer from the list.

'The race naturally must be won by the other favourite, The Smasher,' said Captain Podgers with a grim smile.

CHAPTER X.—WHAT HAPPENED AT PEBWORTH.

From early morning the usually sleepy streets of quiet Pebworth had been disturbed by the shouts of bawling hoarse-voiced vendors of so-called 'correct' cards, purporting to furnish accurate information as to the names, weights, and colours of the riders, the nomenclature and ownership of the horses, and other particulars relating to the forthcoming race. Some of these

itinerants were in faded red jackets that had felt the dust and the rain on every race-course in Great Britain; others were in tattered fustian, stained by the wet grass of the moorside, where the foot-sore wretches had been sleeping for a few hours after their weary tramp across country. It might have been opined that gold had been discovered in Dartmoor, and that diggers were hurrying up like so many eagles to the prey, so many were the uncouth groups that flocked in. Some of the pilgrims were the veriest human vermin that cumber the earth. There was the thimble-rigger, whose stock-in-trade consisted of the tiny board or slender table, which his unacknowledged associate is carrying now, with the pens and the thimble in his pocket. There were the proprietors of the roulette boards, and the manipulators of the 'three card trick,' so dangerous to unwary youth. There were gipsy fortune-tellers, dark-eyed, yellow-kerchiefed, and long-haired gipsy men, laden with sticks to be pelted at coconuts propped on an ash-wand, or at Aunt Sally with her time-honoured pipe.

All the beggars, street-singers, and sellers of toys or gingerbread in the west of England seemed to have been drawn to Pebworth as steel filings are attracted to a magnet; and with them arrived many a scowling ruffian in baggy slop-suit, or slinking fellow in greasy garments of threadbare black, whose object could hardly have been the wish to witness a contest of strength and speed between two or more gallant horses. Probably the man in black was one of those miserable beings who bet with chance customers, and if they lose, pay in person; if not in purse, braving kicks, ducking, and ill-usage, the risk of fire, or ten ill-got sovereigns. As for the sturdier brute in nailed boots and velveteen, with the knotted bludgeon beneath his arm, it will go hard with him if some half-tipsy owner of a watch be not lightened of it before bedtime.

In poured gigs and carts and carriages of every size and kind, some full of honest holiday-makers, others of thoughtful devotees of the Mammon that presides over the great green gaming-table that we know by the name of a race-course. Among the last-mentioned, who in turf phraseology are termed 'bookmakers,' were many, often of gentle birth and nurture, whose feverish life for ten months of the year was one of incessant locomotion, calculation, care, and toil. Some men, sufficiently well educated to see themselves as others see them, yet work harder at the dubious profession they have selected, than does a prosperous doctor or barrister of many briefs—ever on the millroad or in telegraph office, scrambling for make-shift lodgings, suing at the doors of crowded hotels—chilled by the rain of Newmarket, broiled by the sun of Chantilly—and incessantly on the wing to some new race-meeting, goaded on by the *ignis-fatuus* of Hope.

The carriages were drawn up three deep around the judge's chair and the stand. Small as the race-course of Pebworth was, it presented a gay and animated appearance. There were the well-appointed drags of every regiment within reach of the little Devonshire town, while the equipages of the county aristocracy were there in unusual numbers. There were the Falfords, the Carews, the Trelawneys, and the Tresyllians, the Courtenays, and the Penruddocks, all the rural digni-

taries of the district. The Earl of Wolverhampton was there with two of his daughters, accompanied by Blanche Denzil, who was confident of her brother's success. Lord Harrogate too was there on horseback.

No carriage from Carbery was on the Pebworth course that day. Sir Sykes had heard with displeasure that his son was about to take a part in a sleazebag race. Jasper's promise, however, had been given. His name was in print as the rider of Norah Creina, and the baronet saw no help for it. He refused, however, to attend the race with the ladies of his family, and gave but a reluctant consent to his younger daughter's petition to be allowed to accompany Lady Maud and Lady Gladys to the festive scene. The course itself presented a lively and not uncomely scene, the brilliant beauty of the day adding a witchery to the homeliest objects. The dancing sunbeams gilded the tinker's squalid tent and the rags of the beggar-boys who ran, clamorous for halfpence, after the horsemen cantering by. It was possible to forget the gathering of bookmakers and betting-men, now hoarsely shouting out their offers of a wager, possible to ignore the sordid greed that had prompted the attendance of so many, and to imagine what the scene may have been two hundred years ago, when races were a novelty, a mere trial of merit between swift and strong horses, minus the thousand and one degrading ingredients which now compose the saturnalia.

Jasper, his gay silken jacket concealed by the loose white overcoat which he wore, elbowed his way through the crowd towards the place where, hard by the weighing-stand, the nineteen horses which were the practical residuum of the sixty-seven entries were being led to and fro.

'Have a care there! Do mind his heels!' exclaimed the ready voice of an attenuated being in drab gaiters and striped waistcoat, one of the three body-servants in attendance on the magnificent Smasher, as that superb animal began to lash out furiously amongst the mob.

'Grand horse that!' said Captain Prodgens, as with impartial admiration he surveyed the formidable favourite. 'See! what muscles those are that swell beneath a skin as bright and supple as a lady's satin! Does "My Lord" credit it?'

'My Lord,' a vacuous young gentleman in a suit of black and white checks and a soft hat, stood a little way off, sucking the gold head of a short whipstock, and contemplating society in general, through his eyeglass, with a serene stare. Nobody could ever be quite certain whether this aristocratic patron of the turf was unfathomably deep or absurdly shallow. His Lordship was a man of few words, and never committed himself in public to an opinion wise or foolish.

That 'My Lord's' stud had a knack of winning was notorious. But then the laurels, such as they were, may have been due to the florid, well-shaven, middle-aged trainer, with a flower in his button-hole, who stood at his Lordship's elbow.

The Smasher was a splendid black horse, over sixteen hands high, and very powerful. His glossy coat shone like a looking-glass; but that his temper was none of the best was evident, not only by the frequent scattering of the crowd, to avoid his iron-shod heels, but by the sidelong glance of his wicked eye and the irritable lashing of his silken tail.

'Shews the whites of them eyes of his, he do, this morning,' remarked one appreciative groom.

'Bless ye! the captain won't care,' was the phlegmatic reply.

'Rather the captain had the riding of him then nor me,' returned the other.

The captain in question was not Jasper Denzil. It was Captain Hanger, pale and unimpassioned as ever, who now pressed up to speak for a moment with the owner and trainer of the horse he was to ride. As he stood, tapping his bright boots with his heavy whip, his gaudy silk jacket peeping from beneath the loose overcoat, he was the object of an inquisitive admiration that might well have been spent upon a worthier object. In certain circles, now, your gentleman steeplechase rider receives an amount of adulation singularly disproportioned to his utility to the commonweal. Of the well-known Captain Hanger, once in the army, then beggared, and now living by the deliberate risk of neck and bones, it was popularly believed that he would die in the exercise of his profession.

'I don't see the mare!' said Jasper, looking around.

'We're keeping her quiet till the last minute,' whispered his friend. 'No use in letting her chafe here, teased by sun and flies. There, though, is the bell for saddling; and here she comes.'

And as Captain Prodgers spoke, a Homeric burst of laughter from the mob, peal upon peal, announced that something had tickled the fancy of the populace. That something was soon seen to be no other than Norah Creina, looking even uglier, as she was led into the inclosure, than she had done in the stable; a lengthy, clumsy, ungainly creature to look upon, and wearing a bridle of a peculiar and cumbrous construction, fitted with a muzzle and blinkers, and somewhat similar to that employed in horse-faming by the late Professor Rarey.

'There's a beauty for you!' cried out, in the midst of ironical cheers and merriment, a scoffer in drag gaiters.

'Take care of her, gentlemen—she bites!' bawled another voice; and there was tittering among the spectators in carriages and unrestrained guffaws amidst the populace.

'Do you mean, seriously, that the mare is to run in that hideous-looking contrivance?' demanded Jasper sharply and with displeasure in his face, of his ally. 'I'm not a mountebank, I suppose, that I should be made publicly ridiculous on the back of such a horse. A man might as well stand in the pillory as'—

'How many hundreds will be in your pocket, Denzil, and thousands in mine, what with bets and stakes, if Norah Creina comes in first?' interrupted Prodgers earnestly. 'Let those laugh that win. They are waiting for us yonder in the weighing-stand.'

Of all the candidates for success who, seated in their saddles, took one by one their turn at the scales, the only two who attracted much attention were Jasper Denzil and Captain Hanger; the latter because he was to ride the favourite, the former because he had consented to exhibit himself on so very extraordinary an animal as Norah Creina.

'I've known a dark horse to win a race,' remarked one veteran, as he booked a trifling wager on the Irish mare.

'Not with a muzzle though, George!' replied a contemporary, with twinkling eyes.

The riders were all mounted now, and taking, some of them, the preliminary canter that is supposed to dissipate stiffness, and then the glistening line of gaily attired horsemen marshalled itself for the start. To the last moment Captain Prodgers, on foot, kept close to Jasper's stirrup. 'There's the bell!' cried Norah Creina's owner at last. 'Now bend your ear down, dear boy, and mark what I say.'

And as Jasper stooped his head to listen, the other captain whispered to him cautiously but with emphasis. 'Only if you're hard pressed—but she may win without that,' added Prodgers more loudly.

Jasper's suddenly compressed lips, arching brows, and dilated eyes told that the communication had taken even him by surprise.

'The curb-rein, eh?' he said hoarsely.

'Yes; but only as a last expedient. Leave it slack as long as you can, and use the snaffle only; it's as strong as a cable,' called out Prodgers; and Jasper nodded, and cantered up to take his place among the rest.

A waving to and fro of the many-coloured line, the dropping of a flag, a roar from the rabble, and they were off. It was like the effect produced by some gigantic rocket bursting into a galaxy of variously tinted spangles, pink, green, blue, and orange. Then most of these colours seemed to gather themselves together in a group, while Jasper's yellow jacket and black cap, and Captain Hanger's cherry colour and white, crept clear of the crowd.

'The Smasher's third!'

'He's second now. Green's in front.'

'Ah! the captain's a deal too wise to be first, so long as Green will make running for him.'

'Yes, but look at the ugly long-backed Irish mare! The Smasher can't shake her off, straight as he goes.'

The leading horses had got by this time over two-thirds of the course—the first round only—and already the competitors were reduced to seven. Gallant Green was yet in front, riding hard, but his horse was much distressed; and as the second circuit of the course began, The Smasher, skilfully handled by Captain Hanger, shot past him with no apparent effort, and was for the moment first.

'My Lord's usual luck! The race is safe!'

'Cherry and white wins!' shouted hundreds.

But then uprose another roar of, 'Yellow, Yellow for ever!' as the Irish mare, which had hitherto kept the third place, taking fence, wall, brook, and rail with lamb-like docility, suddenly quickened her pace, racing neck to neck, head to head, with the redoubtable Smasher.

'A pretty race! A fine sight! A sheet would cover both of them!' was the general cry. The ladies in the carriages and on the stand waved their handkerchiefs enthusiastically, and of the lookers-on there were scores who forgot that their money was at stake, in genuine enjoyment of the struggle. On the rivals went. Together they flew across the brook, together they crashed through the hedges and fences in their way. Then, thanks to his own skill or to the excellence of his horse, Captain Hanger gained ground, and was in front as he prepared to ride at a stiff line

of rails, the last serious obstacle, save one, to be encountered in the circuit.

Then it was that Jasper tightened the curb-rein that he had hitherto left untouched, and the disfiguring blinkers dropped as if by magic from before Nora Creina's eyes! The result was startling. With a snort and a scream, the fierce mare caught sight of her opponent in the act of gathering himself together for the leap; and with a bound such as a tigress might have given, she hurled herself upon him, striving—but owing to the muzzle, ineffectually—to tear the other horse with her teeth. There was a crashing of splintered timber, an outcry, a heavy fall, and both horses and both men were down amidst the wreck of the fence.

Jasper, bareheaded and dizzy, was the first to stagger to his feet and regain his saddle. A hundred yards in front was the stone wall with its double ditch, the so-called 'sensation jump' of the race, and which the Committee had taken it upon themselves to heighten for this exceptional contest. Beyond, there was the easy run home over smooth turf to the winning-post.

'Yellow! yellow! Yellow wins!' shouted the crowd, as Jasper approached the wall; but then there was a quick thunder of hurrying hoofs upon the green-sward, and Captain Hanger swept past at whirlwind speed, while cries of 'Cherry and white! The Smasher's first!' rent the air. Till that instant, the Irish mare had been going steadily; but now, on seeing her rival outstrip her rapid pace, her fiendish temper again kindled into flame, and with a shrill scream she darted forward. But Captain Hanger knew his art too well to be surprised for the second time. He had his own horse, sobered by the late fall, well in hand; whereas he saw that the savage animal which Jasper rode was completely freed from the control of her rider. By a quick and masterly motion of the rein, he wheeled off, eluding the shock that threatened him, and with a rare courage and coolness put The Smasher's head straight for the wall. The gallant horse rose like a bird, topped the obstacle on which his hind-feet clattered, and recovering himself with an effort, galloped in, the winner, amid the deafening applause of thousands.

Jasper was less fortunate. Panting, snorting with rage, in a lather of heat and foam, the furious mare he rode rose at the wall, struck it with her chest, breaking down the new masonry, and rolled over upon the turf beyond, bearing down beneath her weight the unfortunate rider. 'A man killed!' It needed but that cry to make the mob utterly ungovernable; and in spite of the efforts of the police, gentle and simple, and those who were neither the one nor the other, hurried pell-mell to the spot where lay, beneath the broken wall, the hapless form of Jasper Denzil. 'He's alive!' cried fifty voices, with the oddest mingling of gratification and disappointment. 'The rider's living. It's only the mare that's dead,' a verdict which turned out to be correct. Then a doctor, one out of the half-dozen of doctors on the course, jumped off the cob he rode and took possession of Jasper.

'He'll get over it!' cried the surgeon, feeling first the heart and then the wrist of the sufferer. 'If we had but a carriage now, to get him quietly to the inn.'

Sir Gruntley Pigbury, whose barouche stood near, willingly lent it for such a purpose; and in it Jasper Denzil, under the doctor's escort, was duly removed to the shelter of the *De Vere Arms*.

OUR PET RAT.

AN obliging correspondent writes to us as follows: An article in the September number of *Chamber's Journal* entitled 'Poppet's Pranks' having afforded much amusement to our young people, it has occurred to me that a short account of one of our numerous pets might not be unacceptable, especially as we have often said in our own circle, that 'Billy's doings ought to be immortalised in print.'

We have always considered it an important element in the education of children that they should be taught to regard the brute creation with kindly feelings, and in our own family we have fostered the love of animals by encouraging them to keep pets; so at various periods, dogs, cats, birds, rabbits, guinea-pigs, &c. have all in turn been domiciled with us; and I believe we also harboured for a time a hedgehog and a bat; but these last proving rather intractable, were soon restored to their native freedom.

Those who have had experience in it, best know how interesting any living intelligence becomes, when one is brought closely in contact with it; and we elders, as well as the more juvenile members of our family, have found both pleasure and instruction in observing the habits and dispositions of the little creatures to whom we gave a kindly shelter. Among these, none ever excited more interest or stood higher in the family regards, than Billy our tame rat.

It was in the winter of 1874-5 that a friend who was coming to spend Christmas with us, brought Billy as a new treasure for the children; and for some months he afforded us great amusement. He arrived in a cigar-box in which he usually slept, and on its being opened, he sprang instantly inside our friend's waistcoat, from which safe retreat he ventured to peep out at the strange faces, which he seemed to regard with terror; and this habit he retained, for although he soon established friendly relations with us, he always darted behind the piano or sideboard on the entrance of a stranger; yet his little head with its bright bead-like eyes was sure to peep out presently, as if he wanted to satisfy his own curiosity without being himself observed.

But here let me say, no one must suppose for an instant that Billy resembled the repulsive-looking rat of our farm-yards and ditches. He was of a much smaller size, not larger than a kitten of a month old, and very prettily spotted in brown and white; his eyes were very prominent, standing out like large black beads, and he was particularly nice in his toilet, washing just as a cat does, and keeping his coat always scrupulously clean.

Yet I confess it was some time before I could regard him with equanimity: it was so hard to divest one's self of the general prejudice against his race; and his receding under jaw gave an uncomfortable impression at first; so I used to shrink from him and gather up my skirts at his approach, although my son declared that if he had been introduced to me as a 'rodent,' I should have had no objection to him, and that it was merely the name of 'rat' which excited my aversion.

However, be this as it may, Billy soon won his way to favour in spite of prejudice, and by his intelligence and good temper made himself a general favourite. He especially attached himself to my eldest daughter, and would come at the call of 'Billy, Billy!' from any of his hiding-places, except at night, when he seemed to be quite aware that he was wanted to go to bed (in the cigar-box before mentioned); and then it was often with great difficulty she could entice him from his lurking-place. Sometimes she would tempt him with a biscuit, and he would dart out, snatch it from her fingers, and dart again behind the side-board before she could get hold of him.

We did not usually see much of him in the morning, as he liked to conceal himself behind the heavy furniture. But at dinner-time he was sure to appear, and generally placed himself on my knee, where from time to time he was fed with small bits of bread and vegetables; and if I was not sufficiently attentive to his wants, he would pass over to one of the children's plates, and watching his opportunity, would make a seizure, and dart with the stolen morsel to his storing-place; and this habit of storing was very curious, being evidently an instinct belonging to very different surroundings. In a room appropriated chiefly to the children there was an old sofa a good deal the worse for wear, as what sofa would not be that had been carriage, omnibus, or railway train to seven or eight youngsters successively! Under the pillow, the haircloth had given way, so Billy found a hole conveniently ready for him, and lost no time in appropriating it. Thither he carried many of his stores; and it was most amusing to watch him nibble a biscuit just like a squirrel, sitting back on his haunches and holding it neatly between his fore-paws; and then when he had had enough for immediate wants, he would spring with the remainder to this hole in the old sofa.

But it was not only food he stored; he had a decided fancy for bright colours; and if bits of ribbon or coloured silk were left in his way, he would drag them along the floor, and then leap to the sofa with such celerity that it was almost impossible to deprive him of his booty. Once I looked up in time to see and seize one end of a blue necktie as Billy disappeared with the other behind the sofa pillow. He came up directly to see what detained it, and was very unwilling to give it up; so he pulled and I held, until finding that I was the stronger, he relinquished it, but with such impatient little squeaks! Yet neither then nor at any other time did he ever attempt to bite or shew any ill-temper towards any of us; though, like most pets, he had to bear a fair amount of well-meant teasing, which no kitten would have stood as well.

I recollect one day watching him with much interest. He had found on the floor a large newspaper, which he seized by one corner and pulled towards the sofa, up which he made several vain attempts to leap with the paper in his mouth. He then dropped it, and jumped back and forwards several times, as if he was measuring his distance, or making calculations with an eye to future success. Then again catching hold of the paper, he tried to leap with it, but again he failed; so at last I took pity upon him, and tore one half of the paper away, when he was able to manage the remainder, and carry it off in triumph to his den.

During the winter evenings, when the children were engaged with their lessons, Billy was usually to be found on the table rummaging among their books and catching at their pens; which latter amusement he enjoyed very much after the manner of a kitten running after a knitting-needle drawn quickly up and down the table; but as these amusements rather interfered with the studies, Billy would occasionally be dismissed to the kitchen, to which he had a great dislike. He never stayed there longer than he could help, but on the first chance would rush up the stairs and scratch, or rather I should say *gnaw* for admittance. Speaking of this gnawing, leads me to observe that one objection I had to receiving him, was the fear that he would be very mischievous; but fortunately I never found him so. He had free access to a pantry where a variety of eatables, usually considered dear to a rat's heart, were to be found; but I never knew him to injure anything or even to cut the paper covering of any parcel, no matter what it contained. No doubt it was partly owing to his being so well fed that he was not driven to theft by hunger. I generally scattered for him on the shelves some grains of rice or pickles of starch, and to these he helped himself when inclined. From soap or candles he turned away in disgust, being far too well-bred a rat to indulge in such low tastes; but he dearly loved a bit of plum-cake; and, shall I confess it? he was by no means a teetotaler. If ale was used at dinner, he would rush eagerly about the glasses until he was supplied with some in a spoon. I believe, before he came to us, he had been accustomed to even stronger potations, in which, however, we did not indulge him.

I have said he was not mischievous, neither was he, as mischief among rats is generally understood; but there is no rule without exception, and Billy had a decided penchant for kid gloves. If any were left carelessly about, he was sure to get hold of them and have the fingers eaten off in a few minutes. I cannot tell how many gloves he destroyed, until repeated lessons of this sort enforced more tidy habits.

I must not omit to mention his love of music; when he heard the piano, he would rush to the drawing-room and spring to the performer's knee, where he would remain perfectly quiet, evidently listening with much pleasure. When he first came he was very restless, seeming to live in a state of perpetual motion; but he soon learned to come upon the knee to be caressed and have his head rubbed, which operation afforded him intense enjoyment. He would have lain in a state of supreme delight for an hour if any one would have rubbed his head for so long.

Very various were the opinions entertained of Billy by our friends. Some of our young visitors would ask to see him when they called, and with them he soon became familiar, and would run over their shoulders and about their necks quite freely; but others had a perfect horror of him; and I remember once, on going down to receive two ladies, I found one of them standing on the piano-stool in dread of his attacking her; and no declarations as to his perfect harmlessness were of any avail. Another time an old lady and gentleman were spending the evening with us, and knowing the latter to be of a very nervous temperament, I had given strict orders that Billy

should be kept down-stairs. But Billy had no idea of losing his tea, and managing to escape from the servant who had him in charge, in he rushed, as soon as the door was opened, and made straight across the room, as usual for my knee. I gave him a bit of cake to keep him quiet, and covered him up with my handkerchief. 'What's that, what's that?' exclaimed the old gentleman anxiously. I replied as carelessly as I could; 'Oh, it's only a little pet of the children's;' and hoped no more notice would be taken; but presently our friend got up, and came round to where I sat just as Billy had finished his cake and put up his head for more. Never shall I forget his look of dismay as he exclaimed: 'It's a rat!' while making hasty tracks for the door. However, we succeeded in allaying his fears; and Billy was allowed to run about freely, with only an occasional shudder from our friend if he approached him too closely.

During the spring we had a lady staying with us who could not be reconciled to seeing a rat run about the house, and who repelled all friendly overtures on the part of our pet; so one morning, out of consideration for her, Billy was banished to another room whilst we were at breakfast; and lo! on going into the room afterwards, I found my friend's ball of cotton cut into shreds, which were piled in a little heap on the floor. It really seemed as if he had done it from revenge, for though I had had knitting about repeatedly, he often rolled the balls on the carpet, but never injured them.

While enough has been said, I think, to shew that Billy was a very interesting pet, and our compels me to admit that like wiser and better folk, he had his faults; and I am sorry to say his besetting sin was jealousy. Although so thoroughly good-tempered with all the members of our family, he would not tolerate another pet in the house. He had not been long with us, when he killed a canary that had lighted on his back. At first, there were threats of summary vengeance; but on reflection, it was thought possible that he had been frightened by its sudden descent upon him, and had killed the bird in an impulse of self-defence; so it was decided to give him the benefit of this supposition, and he was forgiven and restored to favour.

But when the midsummer holidays arrived, one of our boys brought home a handsome young retriever, whom it was evident from the first Billy regarded with no friendly eye. The children of course were much taken up with the fresh arrival; and I presume Billy felt himself neglected, and therefore lost no opportunity of revenging himself upon the new favourite. It was wonderful to see the courage of the little creature in venturing to attack an animal so much larger than himself. If the dog were lying quietly on the rug, he would spring on him, and then retreat so quickly that at first we did not know whether he had bitten him or not, as the dog would merely utter a low growl and retire. But one day at dinner, when our canine friend was being supplied with rice, which probably had formerly fallen to Billy's share, our little pet was so enraged, that he rushed across the table and bit the dog on the mouth severely. From that time his doom was sealed; it was felt that either he or the dog must be dismissed, and the verdict was unanimous in favour of keeping the retriever; so Billy was tied

up in his box and sent back to his former owner. Since then, we have occasionally heard of his welfare; and the last news concerning him was, that he had been taken into a garden, 'but was evidently too much awed by the immensity of the universe to enjoy it.'

THE HIGHLAND KEEPER.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.—INCHGARRY'S NARRATIVE.

Some years ago, while upon a professional visit at the mansion of a well-known Highland gentleman, I was invited one morning by my host to inspect his famous kennel of staghounds. On that occasion, I remember well, my interest was curiously divided between the princely animals themselves and the magnificent specimen of humanity who acted as their custodian. Standing at least six feet, his finely proportioned, athletic figure was displayed to advantage by a well-made knickerbocker deer-stalking suit. His face was fair, full-bearded, and strikingly regular in its features. In the quick blue eyes gleamed the rapidly succeeding emotions of an intelligent, proud, sensitive nature. I observed that he usually addressed the chief by the name of the estate (a practice by no means uncommon in some parts of Scotland), and that the word 'sir' was somewhat infrequent in his speech. There was nothing decidedly disrespectful or assumptive in his manner, yet it was quite unlike that of modern inferiors towards superiors generally. I had been so struck during our inspection of the kennels with his appearance and bearing, that on our return to Inchgarry Hall, I put several questions to my worthy host respecting him. The result of these was, that after informing me that the young fellow's name was Donald Stewart, and that he was a native of Badenoch, he entered upon the following curious and instructive narrative of his first settlement at Inchgarry, and of the tragedy in which it eventuated; pointing out as he did so, with great frankness, the evils a landlord may create among his people by delegating too largely to an inferior the personal supervision of his interests.

James Forbes, the son of one of the chief's humblest dependants, had been reared upon the estate. Industry, a certain versatility of talent, and above all, an uncompromising yet judicious sycophancy, had together stood him in such good stead that, beginning his career as stable-boy, he had passed rapidly to assistant-gardener, head-gardener, and manager of the home-farm; until, at the time the events we are about to record took place, he was his master's factotum, holding the position and title of sub-factor to the property. Residing for three parts of the year in London or abroad, Inchgarry necessarily gave him large powers in matters affecting his tenantry and servants; so that the factorship proper being then in the hands of an estimable but old and infirm lawyer, with whom the wily Forbes had ingratiated himself—the authority of the latter was almost boundless. Like all sycophants, he was also a tyrant. The tenantry, who held their farms on long leases, and were practically part and parcel of the soil, escaped the oppression to which, under other circumstances, they might

have been subjected. Nevertheless, Forbes contrived in many ways to harass and annoy all who in any way offended him. As for the immediate servants of the Hall and home-farm, the foresters and keepers, the labourers and handicraftsmen on the estate, his was to them strictly a reign of terror. None but those who chose to do so by abject flattery and toadyism dared hope to escape molestation.

Among those trucklers to whom Forbes extended his patronage, was one John Sutherland—or Ian Dhu, as he was invariably styled—the idlest and most worthless character in the district. It would be difficult to conceive what bond could exist between this semi-pariah, poacher, and vagabond, and the chief's confidential agent, did we not remember that men of the sub-factor's stamp invariably make a henchman of some unscrupulous master of their own weapon—sycophancy. Ian Dhu had not only the skill to step into the good-will of Forbes by his fawning, but to establish himself therein by acting as spy and reporter upon all that was said and done upon the estate. Following no recognised employment, though ostensibly odd-man about his patron's private grounds, he perverted his leisure by haunting the garden, workshops, bothies, the keepers' houses, and the kitchen of the Hall itself, picking up scraps of information for the jealous ear of the sub-factor. He was, in fact, a necessity of the pernicious system of control which reigned; and he was, at the time our story commences, in the full light of favoritism.

Inchgarry, my host, was a just, large-hearted, and clear-headed man; of rather an indolent disposition no doubt, but, when roused to interest, both prompt and strong-willed, brooking neither argument nor persuasion. His brief occasional visits to the Hall were always marked by some change in, or reversal of, his agent's arrangements, as well as by some considerate extension of privileges to his 'people.' In one instance his wrath had been awakened by the neglected condition of his garden and kennels; the latter perhaps his dearest subject of pride. He spoke sharply and conclusively about these matters to Forbes, whose minions both the head-gardener and chief-keeper were. Ten days thereafter he announced that he had engaged a man from the Lothians to superintend his garden-grounds, and a gamekeeper from Badenoch to supplant the inefficient favourite; adding, however, with characteristic kindness, that the superseded men might remain, if they chose, as second-hands until they could better themselves. Forbes received the news of these innovations with outward deference and submission, but inward chagrin and rage. It was the beginning of the end, as it proved.

Archie Guthrie, the new gardener, arrived first on the scene to form a nine days' subject of comment to the simple population of Inchgarry; and a few weeks later Donald Stewart took possession of the roomy and comfortable keeper's cottage so picturesquely situated by the loch side. He was accompanied by his sister, a few years his junior, who undertook to act as his housekeeper, and by a powerful-looking young serving-lass. Effie was as unlike her brother as well could be. She was *petite*, of slight frame, with small delicate features. Lithe, active, elfish, her dark hair and pale face, together with the general grace and rapidity of her

movements, soon acquired for her the pretty sobriquet of *sheach* or fairy. Cheerful, even volatile, this singular creature had yet a depth of tenderness and sympathy so easily stirred, so sensitive and all-pervading, that nothing animate appeared to escape its influence. In character, then, as well as in appearance, she presented a marked contrast to her handsome, really good-hearted, but choleric and somewhat imperious brother. Yet never perhaps, the chief informed me, was brotherly and sisterly affection more complete and perfect than between these two. In a short time they had finished their new domestic arrangements, and passed through the usual ordeal of rustic criticism. Effie glided at once into the respect and confidence of every woman on the estate—a feat which the student of womankind will consider an all but impossible one. Her kind-heartedness and tact, doubtless, were the means towards such a result, aided as they were by the incessant and impartial distribution of favours, which her deft fingers and clever little head enabled her to do with an expenditure of nothing more than her redundant goodwill and energy. The other sex became her slaves to a man. Every one within a radius of ten miles in that sparsely peopled district came under the spell of the *sheach*, and loved or admired her secretly or openly, platonically or otherwise, according to temperament or position. Inchgarry gave some most amusing instances of her sway: of stalwart Highlanders seized by the ear and marched off to perform some menial duty, or commanded to execute some commission for herself or neighbours. It was said that even Forbes himself, surly as he was, and imbittered from the first against her brother, could never disguise the pleasure which Effie's presence gave him: probably the most harmless and respectable sentiment he ever entertained. He refused nothing she asked for herself or others, and did not hesitate to proclaim his high opinion of her disposition and character. I record this with pleasure as the one bright spot redeeming a dark and contemptible nature.

Forbes and Stewart instinctively regarded each other as enemies from the first. Frank and open to a fault, the new keeper chafed under the reticence and duplicity of the sub-factor; and to every unreasonable command he returned a hot and indignant refusal; to every malicious word an angry, contemptuous retort. Thoroughly acquainted with his own duties, he would brook no interference; and to Forbes's utter confusion, on one occasion, when that worthy had attempted to meddle in some matter affecting the dogs, he boldly threatened, in presence of several underlings, to report him to Inchgarry for obstructing his work. Before two months had passed, it was war to the knife between them. As was natural, the majority of the natives secretly rejoiced to find that the young stranger meant to beard the tyrant; while the great man's favourites and the constitutionally envious nursed a bitter enmity against him as an interloper. The despotism was now broken up into two struggling factions; and the contest was a protracted and unhappy one.

But more fierce and implacable even than Forbes's hatred of the keeper was that conceived by his henchman, Ian Dhu. To the keenness of partisanship he added a violent personal animosity, which only ended with the tragic event hereafter detailed.

Ian had long been suspected of deer-poaching; but hitherto the friendship of the sub-factor had screened him from conviction if not from detection. At last Stewart caught him red-handed in the act of 'galloching' a stag in one of the favourite 'passes' of the forest. He reported the fact at once to Inchgarry, who, if not exactly claiming his ancestral power of 'pit and gallows,' reserved to himself the right of deciding whether or not any of his 'people' should be handed over to the civil authorities. His decision was a most merciful one—merely requiring Sutherland to surrender his gun to the keeper. The sentence nevertheless rankled with deadly purpose in his heart; and but for one singular circumstance, would doubtless have earlier taken the form of the terrible revenge he ultimately sought.

That circumstance was his love for Effie Stewart. He too had been smitten by the *sheach's* bewitching face and smile—smitten as only such dark, troublous natures can be smitten. His love was to him a terrible torture. The better thoughts which this new and powerful passion awakened, only goaded and stabbed, being too intermittent to subdue the darker passions which they illumined. From the moment he first saw Effie, a marked change came over him, or, more properly speaking, his idiosyncrasies became intensified. Always taciturn, he was now morose and brooding; his surliness became vehement irascibility, and his roving stealthy movements were now erratic and purposeless. He would hang for hours around the kennels, pass and repass the keeper's cottage a dozen times a day, inventing trifling excuses for calling there, that he might look upon the girl whose unconscious influence had so strongly affected him. In her presence his misery was complete. He would crouch on a settle by the fireside, silent and burning with the unquenchable fire within him, his furtive impassioned glances following her every movement, as Effie flitted about the house. Whenever the little woman paused from her work, and with piquant, gracious vivacity addressed some pleasant remark to him, the heavy brows would unbend, and the dark eyes lift themselves to her face with a transient gleam of supreme pleasure, only to be averted again in increased gloom and depression. On those occasions when the young neighbours extemporised a merry-making at one or other of their houses, or, as was oftener the case, in the roomy cottage of the keeper, Ian Dhu's torture was beyond description. There he was compelled to witness the object of his infatuation surrounded by a number of youths, many of whom he instinctively knew were fascinated by her. He listened entranced when she sung—but, then, other ears also drank in the sweet sounds; he watched the slight elfish figure move in the merry dance, but was she not observed with admiration by every one? First one and then another of the strapping young Highlanders became her partner, would hold her hands, clasp her waist, and whirl with her in the freedom of the old-fashioned reels; every incident adding a fresh torment to the jealous heart of Ian Dhu.

Time went on, and Ian Dhu was thus fain to curb the rebellious desire for revenge upon Donald Stewart. The gratification of looking upon Effie was only possible under conditions which his revenge would entirely destroy. Like

a hungry spaniel, he crouched and fawned when he would otherwise have snapped. He submitted to obey many overbearing behests of the haughty young keeper, to assist him about the croft or go on messages; and acted generally so as to gain Stewart's tolerance, if not his confidence. These tactics were not unobserved by Forbes, who, however, satisfied of the genuineness of the hatred with which his henchman viewed Donald, for a time attributed them to crafty zeal in his own service.

As for the sub-factor himself, time only increased his detestation of the keeper. Inchgarry was in London attending to his parliamentary duties; and Forbes did not neglect the opportunity of wreaking his malice in every possible way upon his proud-spirited subordinate. In his letters to the chief, the sub-factor conveyed many hints derogatory to Stewart, and succeeded to some extent in his unworthy purpose.

The young man, who was not only conscious of his abilities, but enthusiastic in his desire to acquire himself creditably in all that concerned his craft, one morning received a cold sharp letter from Inchgarry, recounting a charge of permitting poaching in the forest, and commenting severely upon his negligence. The chief circumstantially stated that the interior portions of a deer had been found in a 'pass' through a certain hill, where it had been 'galloched.' The astonishment of Stewart was for the moment fully equal to his chagrin. He had had that very pass carefully watched by the under-keepers, and especially by his favourite and friend, a young sandy-haired blue-eyed lad from Lochaber, whose surname of Grant had been familiarised, in Highland fashion, into 'Grantoch' on account of his popularity. After the first burst of angry surprise, Stewart sought Grantoch, who in his laconic way repudiated the possibility of the thing, and after a deliberate study of the subject, as he lent upon his gun, quietly delivered himself of his opinion. About ten days previous, he said, while cutting open a hind, which in accordance with orders he had shot for the dogs, Ian Dhu had been present. Chancing to return to the same place about half an hour later in search of the knife which he had dropped, he was not a little surprised to find the refuse portions removed; and was completely puzzled when he observed, by the traces of blood amongst the heather, that they had evidently been carried up the forest. He was certain now that Sutherland had, with the connivance of Forbes, taken this method of throwing suspicion of negligence upon Stewart. The head-keeper's quick intelligence grasped the whole affair before Grantoch had finished. He directed his assistant to state the facts as they were, in a letter to the chief; and wrote himself a respectful but firm repudiation of the charge. The effect was this: Forbes received a freezing order from Inchgarry to turn Ian Dhu out of his service. Nothing further was said; no reflection made as to his possible complicity in a design to injure the keeper's character.

But the incident had rendered the sub-factor's desire for revenge uncontrollable. He goaded on his discharged henchman to be the instrument of wreaking their common hatred on the keeper. To his surprise, Ian Dhu was sullenly intractable. Forbes was at first furious, but incidentally learn-

ing the obstacle which existed in Sutherland's passion for Effie Stewart, he resolved to use this as the very means of bringing him round to his purpose. He had heard, amongst other gossip, that Archie Guthrie's attentions to the girl were received with favour. Ian was now completely under his control, and accident unfortunately favoured the factor in working upon his jealousy. Returning home from a visit to the post-town one evening in his dog-cart, Forbes observed, on a part of the road near Stewart's cottage, the lovers standing together arm-in-arm, in the moonlight, evidently transacting a lengthened and agreeable parting for the night. Ian, whom he still sheltered, was waiting his arrival and assisted him to alight. With a malignance worthy of the worst part of his evil nature, he immediately despatched the unsuspecting Sutherland upon a message which should take him past the spot where Archie and Effie were standing. The effect was terrible. Ian Dhu on reaching the place discovered the pair in the act of embracing; staggering for a moment as if shot, he fled from the spot and disappeared, to return, after several weeks, to consummate the tragedy which forms the sequel of the tale.

PART II.—INCHEGARRY'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

Three weeks elapsed, during which no one in Inchgarry had set eyes on Ian Dhu. The story of his love for the *sheach* was commonly known, and speculation was rife as to his proceedings since the night of his disappearance. This was set at rest one evening by his sudden appearance in the kitchen of the sub-factor's house, lean and gaunt as a famished hound. His face was haggard and hunger-pinched, and a gleam very like insanity lit up the dark scowling eyes. His hair and beard were matted and tangled, and his clothes were soiled and rent. It was conjectured that he had spent the interval since his flight, in the fastnesses of the mountains—a prey to the throes of that passion which his powerful nature had conceived. What a picture might not imagination draw of the terrible human struggle enacted in those solitudes! Perhaps some such thought occurred to the frightened women-servants as Ian stood before them. At anyrate, they received him with silent sympathy, and invited him to take refreshment. It does seem strange that the revenge which succeeded his paroxysm of disappointed love should not first have been directed against the young gardener and his sweetheart. Various theories exist to account for this; one being that it really was his purpose to include them among his victims. My informant, however, held the very plausible opinion that Ian Dhu's reason had given way under the great strain on his feelings, that his love was thereafter mercifully a blank to him, while the old grudge against Stewart had assumed unnatural proportions.

Forbes had an interview that night in his own parlour with his quondam henchman as the investigation which afterwards took place proved; and it was late when Ian Dhu slunk from the house by the private door, carrying with him a gun, and was seen to disappear in the belt of firs that skirts the loch. It is mentioned, with that morbid zest for details which a tragedy never fails to excite, that only a few minutes previous

to Ian's plunging into the wood, Archie Guthrie and Effie Stewart (now formally betrothed) had passed the sub-factor's house arm-in-arm. What would have been the consequences of a *rencontre* between the lovers and Black Sutherland is a favourite topic for surmise amongst the people of Inchgarry to this day.

On the following morning, Grantoch, who had returned from his rounds, took his spy-glass from its case and directed it towards Bhein à Bhuachail. A fire in the heather on this hill had been reported earlier, and Stewart had gone to investigate the cause, telling Grantoch to follow him when his other duties should leave him at liberty. The burning of the heather in the month of July, and in the centre of the 'forest' ground, was a serious matter in the eyes of the keepers, driving the deer as it would, from a favourite haunt. Grantoch now desired to make out, if possible, in what direction Stewart had gone, that he might be able to join him by the shortest route. He brought the glass to bear on every part of the mountain, its wood-clad base, purple sides, gray scaurs, and shimmering water-courses—but without result; and was just about to close it, when his glance rested upon a human figure shewing on the near shoulder of Bhein à Bhuachail. His practised eye told him at once it was not Donald Stewart. He carefully scrutinised it for some minutes, until with startled surprise he recognised Ian Dhu creeping over the watershed, bearing a gun on his shoulder.

Grantoch quietly shut his glass, returned it to its case, examined with professional caution the lock of his double-barrel to see that it was at half-cock, and started at a swinging trot for the foot of the hill. Its nearest point was only a mile and a half distant; but, convinced that Ian was on another poaching expedition, he resolved to get the assistance of a keeper whose cottage stood about a mile farther up the loch. Here he was agreeably surprised to find Stewart engaged in issuing some orders. The latter explained that he had come direct to the cottage to learn whether the under-keeper knew anything of the fire; and that he found he had visited the spot. It was merely a patch which had soon burned out of itself, and Stewart had therefore waited leisurely for his comrade's appearance. He pricked up his ears, however, when Grantoch told him of Ian Dhu's movements, at once suspecting him of having intentionally fired the heather. The thought brought his hasty temper to such a heat that he resolved at once to clear up the matter by giving chase to Ian Dhu.

The trio took the route which Grantoch had seen Sutherland take, and their keen eyes kept them close on his track after it quitted the watershed. At length they came in full view of him as he now strode rapidly along the side of the hill. Their object was to detect him in the act of poaching, confident that Inchgarry would, this time prosecute, and hopeful that the incendiarism would also be brought home to him. To avoid being observed in their turn, they now crouched along amongst the tall heather, till within a few hundred yards of where they had seen Ian Dhu last halt. Stewart then proposed to advance alone on all-fours to reconnoitre. As he thus cautiously approached the poacher, he observed that he had leapt into the dry channel of what is termed a winter stream, and was looking along

the barrel of his weapon—a rifle—which he held resting on the bank at the opposite side of the channel to that on which Stewart now lay. Ian Dhu's face was as if possible more haggard and wild than ever, while the hand which grasped the rifle shook as if with ague or palsy. His glance was directed towards a spot some hundred yards distant, where the heather shewed blackened as if by recent fire. Now and again the maniac—for he had every appearance of being bereft of reason—would start up with an impatient cry and gesture, as though disappointed by the non-appearance of some object for which he waited. At last, in view of the puzzled and somewhat terrified keeper, he brought the rifle to his shoulder, and with steady deliberate aim, fired at an object unseen by the keeper. The echoes which the sharp report awakened were mingled with a piercing cry!

Ian Dhu had not time to complete his attempted spring from the channel of the stream before his shoulder was seized in the strong grasp of Donald Stewart. He turned to face his captor; then with a scream of terror, which for the moment paralysed the stout-hearted keeper, tore himself free and dashed down the mountain like a hunted stag. Donald, with the two under-keepers, who had rapidly approached, watched him in silence as he sped from rock to rock. Pursuit was useless. Following him with their eyes as he disappeared and reappeared among the inequalities of the ground, they at last observed, with a thrill of horror, that he did not turn aside in his descent from a well-known point at which the hill sloped almost precipitously for several hundred feet. With blanched faces and upraised hands they saw Ian Dhu pause for a moment on the dangerous verge, and take a fearful leap.

The three keepers resolved at once to make a detour to the spot where he must have fallen, and for this purpose hastened down the shoulder of the hill. They had not proceeded far when Grantoach called the attention of the others to a groaning sound proceeding from some spot near them. Stewart believing it to be the dying moans of a wounded stag, answered his faithful comrade rather rudely and hurried on. His course happily took him to the very spot where the man, whom Ian Dhu's last bullet had reached, lay bleeding and apparently dying. To the horror and amazement of all, it proved to be Forbes the sub-factor. Stewart, with a sensitiveness that did him credit, left the wounded man in the charge of Grantoach and their companion, and hurried off himself to procure assistance. With as much speed as the task would admit, he returned to the spot, leading a sure-footed pony, and on this, supported alternately by the keepers, Forbes was conveyed by easy stages to his own house.

The wound proved mortal; but before his death he made a statement which threw light upon the mysterious events of that fatal morning. Along with Ian Dhu he had concocted a scheme for Stewart's destruction. He it was who had instructed Sutherland to fire the heather, calculating shrewdly that the circumstance would unfailingly call the keeper to the spot, in all likelihood alone, his trusty assistant being fully employed at that early hour. Ian, lying in wait with Forbes's rifle, was to have shot the head-keeper whenever he appeared on the scene. The explanation of his own unfortunate presence was

extremely simple. When he believed the dark deed accomplished, he had become anxious to recover the rifle from Ian Dhu, seeing that, in the event of capture, its possession would open up a suspicious inquiry respecting his own share in the dastardly business. This motive sealed his own fate. The impatient and vengeful Ian had not paused to reckon the chances of a mistake, but had pressed the trigger the moment he saw a human figure moving through the high heather towards the scene of the fire. Stewart, so happily deterred from his first purpose of visiting the burning hill, thus escaped the doom intended for him.

'And what were the fortunes of the other characters in your sad story?' I asked of the chief.

'Oh! You see that cottage over there with the sweet bit of garden in front, ornamented with rockeries and ferns? That is the home of Archie Guthrie and his wife, *née* Effie Stewart. The fairy scarcely deserves the name now, having lost much of her elfish slenderness and activity, but is after all, perhaps, a prettier heroine as the gardener's wife, and less dangerous to my young male subjects. A coquette she certainly never was; but discreet and prudent to a rare degree. I am at a loss to divine what the source of her strange power was, but am thankful she is now Mrs Guthrie.'

I laughed at the naïve remark.

'As for Stewart,' continued Inchgarry, 'he has married well—the daughter of one of my wealthiest tenants. Grantoach has got a chief charge on an estate in the West Highlands, taking with him the buxom servant whom Stewart brought from Badenoch. So you see they are all doing well. And for my own part, the revelations which were made at the time of the tragedy fully awakened me to the duty of weighing carefully the complaints of my "people," and of charily guarding against too free an investiture of power over them to an ignorant, malicious, or interested servant. I spend more time here than formerly, and am gratified by the increased contentment and prosperity of those under my care. The story, you will now perceive, though sad, is not without its moral.'

BALLOON-TRAVELLING.

AERIAL navigation, the faculty of locomotion through the air, the power of soaring bird-like into the azure fields of space, has always been tantalisingly seductive to the human imagination. So engrossing is the theme, that although the subject has already been discussed from a scientific point of view in these pages, a few additional words about its more popular aspects may not be found uninteresting to our readers.

Great, and, as it has proved, baseless anticipations were evoked by the advent of the first balloon. Aërostation was to disclose the secrets of the atmospheric world, and by enabling men to predict rains and droughts, secure by the proper cultivation of the soil abundant and excellent harvests. The unmanageable nature of the new invention was not taken into account at all, nor the fact, that although you might ascend into the air from any point you chose, no one could predict

where or how you would descend. This charming uncertainty still attends aerial voyages; no means have yet been discovered of guiding the balloon in a horizontal direction; and it is always so much at the mercy of currents of air, that the course it will follow is a matter of chance, and not an affair of the aeronaut's will or choice.

Attempts have been made to press this unmanageable machine into the service of science, and with some success, although what has yet been done is little more than a suggestion of discoveries which may at some future time be practicable by its aid.

In 1802 Mr Glaisher, author of a history of *Travels in the Air*, made a series of ascents from Wolverhampton, in order to verify a number of scientific observations; the results of which are contained in the annals of the British Association. A new balloon was provided for him, which was not made of silk, but of American cloth, a stronger and more servicable material, and in this aerial machine he encountered sundry mishaps and misadventures, on two occasions narrowly escaping with his life.

Its very danger lends to balloon-travelling a sense of conscious adventure, of thrilling excitement, peculiarly its own. Added to this, the cloud-scenery through which the aeronaut glides is not only novel, but is often, especially at sunrise and sunset, most gorgeously beautiful; while the earth beneath, which seems to have motion transferred to it, presents as it hurries past, a charming and varied panorama. Woods and rivers, hamlets and towns, hills and valleys, and wide-spreading downs, succeed each other in rapid succession. From the immense height, all idea of the comparative altitude of objects is lost; great cities appear like small models of towns, and the biggest man-of-war looks like a boy's toy ship. Morning up in cloudland is a gloriously radiant spectacle. The balloon floats out of darkness into a world of shadowy mountain ranges, colourless and unsubstantial at first, but borrowing from the rising sun the softest, tenderest hues of roseate pink and warmest crimson, glowing and blending and fading away at last into a mellow flood of amber gold.

In France, for some time after their invention, balloons were quite the rage, the first made for scientific purposes being that of July 1803, and which was followed by several others having for their object the solution of many physical problems, not a few of which remain problems still. In 1850 two ascents were made for the purpose of investigating certain atmospheric phenomena. One especially of these aerial voyages was in the last degree unfortunate. Scarcely had the two philosophers MM. Barral and Bixio taken their seats, than they made the unpleasant discovery that their balloon was not in good working order; and while they were hesitating about what should be done in the circumstances, a violent gust of wind settled the question for them, and the

balloon, blown from the earth, shot into the air with the velocity of an arrow. Becoming rapidly inflated, the machine then bulged out at top and bottom, covering the car like a hood, and enveloping the unfortunate aeronauts in total darkness. 'Their position was most critical; and when one of them endeavoured to secure the valve-rope, a rent was made in the lower part of the balloon, and the hydrogen gas with which it was inflated escaping close to their faces suffocated both of them, causing a momentary exhaustion, followed by nausea and violent vomiting.'

In this helpless condition they discovered that they were descending rapidly; and on groping about for the cause they found that the balloon was split open in the middle, and that there was a rent in it two yards long. This was a cruel predicament in which to find themselves thirty thousand feet up in the air, and very naturally they abandoned all hope of life, although, like wise men, they did all in their power to preserve it. To lessen the downward velocity of the balloon they threw overboard all their ballast, then article after article of their raiment even to their fur coats, preserving only their instruments, with which they at last descended in safety in a vineyard near Lagny.

The motion in a balloon is scarcely perceptible. You are not conscious of rising; but the earth appears to recede from you, and to advance to meet you during a descent. In the higher regions of the air, the intense solitude of the cloud-scapes has something in it awful and oppressive, as if the world were left behind for ever, and the aeronaut were about to launch chance-driven into the vast infinitude of shadowland. Amid these altitudes, if any sound is made by the aeronaut, it is echoed back in ghostly tones by the vast envelope of the balloon, which as it floats casts a shadow sometimes black and sometimes white; but which is usually surrounded by an aureole or halo more or less distinctly marked.

In throwing out ballast or any small article from a balloon, a certain degree of caution is requisite, as a bottle or any similar object falls with such velocity that if it were to strike the roof of a cottage it would go right through it. We are told that Gay-Lussac, in an ascent in 1804, threw out a common deal chair from the height of 23,000 feet. It fell beside a country girl who was tending some sheep in a field, and as the balloon was invisible, she concluded—and so did wiser heads than hers—that the chair had fallen straight down from heaven, a gift of the Virgin to her faithful followers. No one was sceptical enough to deny it, for there was the chair, or rather its remains. The most the incredulous could venture to do was to criticise the coarse workmanship of the miraculous seat, and they were busy carping and fault-finding with the celestial upholstery, when an account of M. Gay-Lussac's aerial voyage was published, and extinguished at once the discussion and the miracle.

In 1808 M. Tissandier and a professional aeronaut made a voyage over the North Sea in a balloon called the Neptune. The machine made

a splendid ascent, and was soon floating in mid air buoyant as a feather at the height of four thousand feet, bound, as the aeronauts fondly hoped, for the coast of England. But in this they soon found that they had counted without their host; the Neptune, impelled by the wind, was soaring away in the direction of the middle of the German Ocean. This most inauspicious goal struck terror for a few moments into their ardent souls; but they were soon reassured by observing that the wind in the atmospheric regions below them was setting towards the shore, and that by sinking into this lower current of air they could return whenever they chose. Thus yielding to the current of their fate, they allowed themselves to be carried out to sea, floating like gossamer into the very heart of cloudland. Gorgeous scenes, more splendid, more airy, more delicate than the most glowing visions of the Arabian Nights, rose around them. It was like the enchantment of a vivid dream. They took no note of time; every sense was absorbed in that of vision; they even forgot to be hungry, but gazed, and gazed, and gazed again upon the wide waste of waters that spread beneath them, glowing like one vast molten emerald; its glories half seen, half hid by the multitude of cloud mountains and valleys that rose fluctuating and fantastic on every side, fair with luminous half-lights, delicately lovely with pearly iridescence shading into silvery gray. Thus hovering miles above the world and its commonplace cares, they enjoyed an interval of transcendent delight, rudely broken in upon by the professional aeronaut, a creature of appetite, who pulled the valve-rope unbidden, thus causing them to descend from their cloudy paradise into the grosser atmosphere that immediately surrounds the earth, where they at length bethought themselves of lunch. In spite of thick thronging poetic fancies and transcendental raptures, they made a very tolerable repast, M. Tissandier finishing his portion of the fowl by tossing a well-picked drumstick overboard. For this imprudence the professional was down upon him immediately. 'Do you not know,' quoth he, 'that to throw out ballast without orders is a very serious crime in a balloon?' M. Tissandier was at first inclined to argue the point; but on consulting the sensitive barometer he was fain to admit that in consequence of the disappearance of the chicken-bone, the Neptune had made an upward bound of between twenty and thirty yards. Very fine calculation—if true.

Luncheon satisfactorily over, they again soared upward out of sight and sound of earth, and soon found themselves once more in their cloudy Elysium, but with a change; mist and fog hemmed them round instead of the breeze and sunshine, but did not make them less happy. The Neptune was to them a little Goshen, a lonely floating temple of peace, dedicated to contentment and ease. The serenity of their souls was depicted in their faces. Tranquil and easy, they took no thought of the morrow, no, nor of the next hour, when suddenly there broke upon their ears, like a faint far-distant murmur, a sound subdued, monotonous, and yet terrible. Was it the voices of the spheres? No, gentle reader; it was a strain more awful still—it was the voice of the sea. In a moment the listless ease, the sweet do-nothingness of those idlers in cloudland was gone, clean washed

away by the swish and swell of that intrusive ocean, which stretched beneath them, painted by the sunset with a thousand glowing tints of beauty, which they had neither leisure nor tranquillity to admire. Fortunately the wind was setting inshore; and amid the fast falling shades of night, the anxious aeronauts were fortunate enough to descry a cape crowned with a lighthouse. Every nerve was strained to reach it; and after a few moments of intense anxiety and effort, the anchor was let go. It caught in a sandhill, and the Neptune once more moored to earth, rolled over on its side, and was after some difficulty secured.

The spot where they landed was curiously enough only a few yards from the reef of rocks where the first aeronaut, Pilatre de Rosier, was dashed to pieces in 1785.

Sometimes, like other bubbles, the balloon bursts; and when this little accident happens, say four thousand feet up in the air, it is of course attended with unpleasant and inconvenient consequences, as was the experience of M.M. Fonvielle and Tissandier, who with a party of nine made an ascent in a veteran balloon called 'the Giant' Merry as larks they soared into the air, keenly enjoying the beauty of the day, the novelty of the pastime, the sense of liberty, of entire freedom from all wonted conventionalisms or accustomed restraints. Then with what a keen school-boy edge of appetite they fell upon their chicken, which seems the appropriate food for balloons, eaten from newspapers, which served as plates, and washed down with soda-water and Bordeaux. Champagne was inadmissible; an unruly cork might have popped unawares through the silken tissues of the envelope, and thus hastened a catastrophe. But let us not anticipate. The banquet was over, the board, that is to say the newspapers were cleared, and 'the feast of reason and the flow of soul' had begun. All was bright airy genial cordiality and mirth, when suddenly the attention of the travellers was attracted to a white smoke issuing from the sides of the balloon. Whence came this ominous mist, this preternatural cloud, that began to enshroud them? One reckless youth said: 'It is the Giant smoking his pipe.' And so it was with a vengeance! Then followed a few terrible moments, in which each after his own fashion bade the world farewell, and found it marvellous hard to do so. The clouds, the sky, the pleasant sunlight, was that their last look at each? It seemed so; but while they were still shivering dizzy and aghast upon that awful threshold, the balloon fell, and strange to relate, fell safely, and they were saved.

A few days afterwards Monsieur Tissandier made another ascent in the Neptune with Monsieur de Fonvielle, and they were busily engaged conducting some scientific experiments when a sharp crack like a sudden quick peal of thunder fell upon their astounded ears, and the professional aeronaut exclaimed in a loud startled voice: 'The balloon has burst!' What followed, we give in Monsieur Tissandier's own words: 'It was too true; the Neptune's side was torn open and transformed suddenly into a bundle of shreds, flattening down upon the opposite half. Its appearance was now that of a disc surrounded with a fringe! We came to the ground immediately. The shock was awful. The aeronaut disappeared. I leaped into the hoop, which at that instant fell upon me,

together with the remains of the balloon and all the contents of the car. All was darkness. I felt myself rolled along the ground, and wondered if I had lost my sight, or if we were buried in some hole or cavern. An instant of quiet ensued, and then the loud voice of the aéronaut was heard exclaiming: "Now come all of you from under there." And one after another they emerged unhurt into the sunshine, in time to bid farewell to a few fragments of the balloon which were floating away upon the rising wind.

Such experiences must as a rule be trying to the nerves of most people, and we must be so plain as say that travelling by balloon is at best an act of extreme danger and temerity. In order to utilise balloons, it is evident that some sure means of guiding them must be invented; and this discovery or anything approaching to it has yet to be made. In fact, a balloon is still, after about a hundred years' experience, little better than a toy.

LIGHTNING-CONDUCTORS.

MANY of our readers may have wondered why tall buildings such as church steeples and factory chimneys are provided with thin rods of iron running down their sides; and may have been at a loss to understand their meaning. Their use is to conduct lightning harmlessly to the ground during thunder-storms. We have, however, had warnings enough that a bad lightning-conductor is worse, as regards the security of the building it is supposed to protect, than none at all. Unless the electrical connection with the earth be perfect, the conductor may invite the very danger which it ought to turn aside. Rusted chains, imperfect fittings, and the absence of a sufficient thickness of unvarnished metal, are responsible for much mischief. Lightning, properly dealt with, is robbed of much of its terrific power; but when its natural path is blocked, and its swift circuit interrupted, it inevitably rends and tears and burns, scathing and scattering all substances before its resistless might.

Franklin meant the lightning-conductors which he invented to consist of iron alone. Iron, however, has too strong an affinity for oxygen to allow of this. All moisture, and all heat, corrode it more or less; and thus grew up the custom of pointing the conductors with copper, and in some cases with costly platinum, soldered to the iron rod. But exposure to weather, and the weak galvanic currents which unavoidably set in where metal of one sort is in contact with metal of another sort, cause rapid decomposition at the joint, and encourage the rust to eat into the substance of the rod. A heavy flash will melt or cripple a conductor thus imperfect, and then woe to the structure! This defect can now be cured by coating the iron rod completely with nickel, a metal which defies rust, and which conducts electricity better than the pure iron does. Bars and rods of this nickellised iron have been kept under water for several days without tarnishing, and resist the effects of the most powerful battery of Leyden jars.

It had been believed, until lately, that platinum was a metal with which no rogue, however dexterous, could tamper. The platinum coinage of the Russia of thirty years since was considered un-imitable by the manufacturers of false money;

while the capsules, crucibles, and other apparatus required by scientific men were sold according to the high market value of what is really a precious metal. Unluckily, fraud has been found possible even in this case. The Director of the Royal Italian Observatory on Vesuvius, M. de Luca, surprised at finding first one and then another of the platinum points of his conductors melted by the effect of lightning, made a careful investigation, and discovered that the platinum had been adulterated with from ten to twelve per cent. of lead, and thus rendered fusible. Platinum thus mixed with an inferior metal can be identified by its lesser density, or more easily by the blowpipe, before which a tell-tale green flame will reveal the presence of the lead. Such a mixture would render the hitherto resisting platinum absolutely worthless in the laboratory.

A SPRING BOUQUET.

RAILS the rude Wind-king through the surging sea
Of swaying boughs, that bending to the blast
Their countless arms, with murmurous rustling wave,
In wood and forest; and the hedgerows burst
Into the tender greenery of Spring.

Now shew the clumps of golden crocuses
Their crowns above the freshly scented mould;
And quivering bells of snowdrops glimmer white,
In roadside garden; purple violets
Lark mid their green leaves, heavy-eyed with dew,
Their fragrant perfume scattering on the Dawn.

The polyanthus in her velvet robe—
Yellow and russet—nestles by the side
Of proud auricula; the splendid stars
Of periwinkle—palest lavender—
Gleam from the ivied bank; ranunculus
All-stately queens it o'er her satellites,
The yellow daffodils; Narcissus scents,
With his frankincense sweet, the keen March air,
A flower of peerless beauty.

Wall-flowers shew
From bed and border, their brown-orange blooms;
And under them lingereth a vernal pure,
The last pale primrose. All the pear-trees bend
Beneath their flower-snow; the almonds blush
With roscate bloom; the young year's minstrel sweet—
The mellow thrush—his liquid carol pours
From the old blackthorn.

Nature is astir;
She wakes rejoicing from her Winter sleep,
And with a thousand voices welcomes Spring!

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A WORD ABOUT BIRD-KEEPING.

We have never looked with perfect complacency on the keeping of birds in cages; for it looks very much like an unnatural imprisonment. They have not space to fly about, and there is something painful in seeing them flitting up and down on two or three spars within very narrow bounds, or looking through the wires of their cage as if wishful to get out. It would, however, be of no use to remonstrate against a practice that is common not only over all England but over the whole civilised world. Besides, the keepers of pet birds are not without arguments in their favour. Most of the birds to be seen in cages, such as canaries, goldfinches, or skinkins, have been bred in confinement. They never knew what it was to be at liberty, and in their helpless inexperience, if let loose, they would inevitably perish. There is much truth in this species of excuse for bird-keeping. Some weight is also to be attached to the plea that the little creatures are, generally speaking, so happy in their captivity that many of them live to an old age—say twelve or thirteen years, and keep on piping their 'wood-notes wild' to the last. There may be the further apology, that the maintenance of birds in cages communicates happiness to invalids, or to persons who do not go much from home. There is cheerfulness in their song, and a degree of amusement in witnessing their movements, as well as in attending to their simple wants. Altogether, therefore, there is a good deal to say for bird-keeping. It is not quite so inhumane a practice as it at first appears. In short, birds, like dogs, may be viewed in the light of domestic solacements kindly sent by Providence. Their society and grateful attachment help to fill up many a melancholy gap.

These ideas have been suggested to us by an accidental interview with a Dealer in Birds, who in his own way was apt in the philosophy of the subject. If people would have birds, it was his business to supply them with what they wanted,

and he did so with as great tenderness of feeling as the fragile nature of the article dealt in demanded. He had much to explain respecting the importation of song-birds, and the breeding of them in cages. But on neither of these points shall we say anything. What especially interested us were this intelligent dealer's observations on the proper method of keeping birds. Some folks, he said, have a notion that all you have to do is to buy a bird, put it into a cage, and give it food and water as directed. That is far from being enough. The habits of the animal must be studied. The climate of the room in which it lives, the amount of daylight it should enjoy, the atmosphere it breathes, its freedom from sudden alarms—all have to be thought of, if you wish the bird to be happy; and without that it has little chance of being a pleasant companion.

When the dealer began business many years ago, he was very unfortunate as concerns his stock. He occupied as good a shop as any one in the trade. The birds arranged all around in their respective cages, ready for the inspection of customers, were as merry as birds could be. They sung in full pipe, as if rivalling each other in their gaiety. Provided with appropriate food, with pure water, and fresh air, they had not a want unsupplied. Without any apparent reason, they began to droop and to moult. This did not alone occur at the season when such might be expected. Their moulting was often fatal. Vexed at cases of mortality notwithstanding all his care, the dealer bethought himself that the use of gas in his shop might be injurious, so for gas he substituted an oil-lamp light. Still they drooped and died. He next in various ways and at some expense improved the ventilation of his shop. Still they drooped and died.

What could be the matter? Puzzled to the last extent, the bird-dealer at length conjectured what might be the cause of these numerous deaths. Could it be that the birds wore themselves out singing? If so, the only way to stop

them was to shorten the time they were exposed to the light, for if kept in the dark they are not inclined to sing.

The supposition proved to be correct. He shut up his shop at an early hour, and from that time the mortality of the birds ceased. During the day they had just that amount of singing that suited their constitutions, and in the evening they were left to their repose. This bird-dealer's ingenious discovery seems exceedingly rational. In a state of nature, small birds flit about and sing only during daylight. They retire to rest at sundown. This procedure requires to be imitated in keeping birds artificially. If you let them sing all day and several hours additional by lamp-light, you over-fatigue them. The labour is too much. Of course the birds do not understand that they had better be silent when the lamp or candles are lit. They instinctively keep singing on, as if it were still daylight. The immediate effect of this over-fatigue is that the poor birds are apt to moult, and become attenuated; and suffering from premature exhaustion, they speedily perish.

The dealer mentions that few birds subject to the exhaustion of singing beyond ordinary daylight survive more than two years. This does not surprise us. How could any of our public vocalists, male or female, and of even a robust constitution, endure the tear and wear of singing under a mental strain for any great length of time, as much as eighteen hours a day? If human beings would thus sink under the effort of over-work, we need not wonder that the fragile creatures we are speaking of should succumb and drop from their perch.

As a means, therefore, of protecting the lives of pet birds, the recommendation is, to remove the cages to a darkened apartment at nightfall, or if they are not removed, to cover up every cage with a dark cloth before lighting the gas or oil-lamps. In shifting birds from one room to another, it is important to see that there be no change in the temperature. If removed to a different temperature, there is a chance of their moulting, which may be preliminary to something more serious. Let it be always kept in mind that Nature supplies a coat to suit the heat or cold in which the creatures are placed. By changing a bird from a warm to a cold climate, birds change their coat and get one that is heavier, and *vice versa*, so, by repeated changes they are kept continually moulting, instead of once a year, as they ought to do.

We have referred principally to the treatment of small song-birds, the delicacy of which calls for particular attention. But our observations in the main apply to all birds whatsoever. If it be wrong to keep a little bird singing beyond its constitutional capacity, so it would be wrong to over-work a parrot by causing it to speak eighteen hours on a stretch. It would seem that by this degree of loquacity, the parrot has a tendency to take some kind of bronchial affection, analogous to the ailment of preachers, usually known as 'the min-

ister's sore throat,' and which, if not checked in time, may prove equally disastrous.

We have thrown these interesting facts together not only in the interest of bird-keepers, but for the sake of inculcating kindness to animals. W. C.

MY KITMITGHAR 'SAM'

For nearly three years my Kitmitghar, as that functionary is called, was cook, butler, and factotum of my then small bachelor establishment in India. A cunning concocter of mulligatawnies, curries, and chutnies—as cunning a hand too in 'cooking' his daily bazaar accounts, adding annas and pice, for his own particular benefit, to the prime cost of as many articles as possible. Mildly remonstrated with, and petty larceny hinted at, his honest indignation would be aroused. 'Master tink I cheat,' he would say; 'master can inquire bazaar-mans; ' well knowing, the rogne, the moral and almost physical impossibility of 'master'—a swell in his way—going to the distant market in a broiling sun, and finding out the ruling prices of flesh and fowl.

This worthy, whose original cognomen of *Moo-tossammy* was shortened into 'Sam' for convenience and euphony sakes, was a Tamil from the Malabar Coast. *Au resto*, a dark, handsome, stoutly-built, clean-looking native, on whose polished skin water and coarse country soap were evidently no strangers. In his early youth, fated to earn his own living, he had been ejected from the paternal hut and placed as a *chokrah* or dressing-boy to a fiery and impetuous Lieutenant of infantry; and under the fostering care of that impetuous and coinless officer, his indoctrination into the art and mystery of a valet had been advanced and improved by sundry 'lickings,' and by frequent applications to his elbow person of boot-heels, backs of brushes, and heavy lexicons of the English and Hindustani languages. This education completed, and when he had learned to appreciate the difference between uniform and multi, mess-dress and parade-dress, and indeed to master the intricacies of his employer's scanty wardrobe—*ton sine lacrymis*, not without 'howls'—then he emerged from dressing-boyhood, was promoted *matie* or under-butler, and got translated into more pretentious bungalows than those of indigent subalterns. By-and-by further preferment awaited him; he became *kitmitghar* (major-domo) in the households of unmarried civilian or military swells, and thenceforward led a life free from kicks and cuffs, canes and whips, and impromptu missiles snatched from toilet or study tables. I have said advisedly 'unmarried,' for except under financial difficulties, Sam would not take service with the Benedicts of Indian society, and the actual presence or possible advent of a wife was the signal for his departure. 'Plenty too much bodder wid lady; too much want ebbery day, ebbery day measure curry stuff, oil, ghee [butter]; too much make say always dis ting too deax, das ting too deax; too much trouble take count. Now, Colonel Sahib he good man; he call, he say, "Sam! how much this week you espend? [spend]" He just look book; he give rupee; no one single word *bobberoo* [fuss] make.' And so, for a palpable reason, my worthy cook-butler eschewed those households where a better-half took the reckoning.

English, after the rickety fashion of a Madrassee, Sam spoke fairly enough; he also read and wrote the language, the latter accomplishment phonetically, but yet sufficiently near to the rules of orthography to make you fully understand and pay for 'thirty seers wrice' as thirty seers (measures) of rice. What if he did elect to spell rice with a *w*? Is it not recorded that an eminent member of a large mercantile firm, in days long gone by, invariably included an *h* in the word sugar? And is it not also chronicled how he chastised almost to the death his son and heir for omitting that letter when invoicing a cargo of best Jamaica moist? If then Blank Blank, Esq. of the city of London opined that sugar required an *h*, why not the same liberty as regards the *w* to Mootosammy of the city of Madras?

A sad waverer in religious opinions Master Sam, I fear. A very Pharisee of a Hindu, a rigid stickler for the worship of Vishnu or Siva on the high-days and holidays of those deities, when his forehead and arms would be spotted and streaked with coloured ashes, his garments would smell of saffron and sandal-wood, his English diminutive name would be put aside for its more lengthy and sonorous native patronymic, and he would be off to the temple to make *poojah* (prayer) to his *swamis* (gods). But yet, somehow or other, all these symptoms and signs of Hinduism would disappear at Christmas, Easter, or Whitsuntide. At those seasons of the Christian year, Sam was no longer Mootosammy, but Sam pure and simple. No more the believer he in the Vedas and Shastras, but a pinner of faith on Aves and Credos; no *poojah* for him now in the temple, but crossings and genuflections in the little chapel of the station. Not a trace in these days of idolatrous scents clinging to cloths and turban, or of 'caste' marks disfiguring brow or limb. Dole in hand—obtained either from pickings at master's 'counts or from bazaar-man's *dustoor* (custom)—he is off to join Father Chasuble's small flock, and to bow down and formalise with the best or worst of that good priest's congregation. I really think and believe, that to secure a holiday and an 'outing,' Sam would have professed himself a Mohammedan during the Ramadan, a Hebrew during the Passover, a Heathen Chinese during the feast of Lanterns, and a Buddhist during the Perihara or other high-jinks of the yellow-robed priests of Gautama Buddha.

I never before or since met any man into whose household death was so constantly making inroads, and strange to say, carrying away the same individual. I suppose that, on a rough estimate, all Sam's kith and kin died at least twice during the thirty months or so that he was in my service.

'Master please'—thus Sam howling and weeping after his kind—'scuse [excuse] me. Gib tree day leave go Madras; too much trouble my house. My poor old mudder—booh! ooh!—plenty long time sick; master know well; too much old got; die last night. Booh! ooh! o-o-g-h!'

'Why, what tomfoolery is this?' I reply. 'Your mother dead! Dead again! Why, man, how can that be? Four months ago you came and told me your mother was dead; you got four rupees advance; you went off, leaving the boy to do your work, and put me to no end of inconvenience. How can the old woman be dead again?'

But the fellow is not the least put out, and is quite equal to the 'fix.' 'Master Sahib,' he says, 'I beg you scuse me. Sahib quite wrong. That time you speak I get leave, not my mudder—my wife's mudder die. Master can look book!'

This random shot anent the 'book' alludes to my diary, in which the disbursement of the money has been entered, but not of course the casualty in his family. But I don't lose the hint nevertheless, and I jot down a memorandum for future reference, should occasion require.

Then Sam goes on: 'I no tell lie, sar. Plenty true; too much bobberree my house make. My fader gone Mysore!'

'Why, bless my heart!' I put in, 'you told me ages ago your father died of cholera in Masulipatam.'

'No, sar,' says Sam; 'never, sar! My grand-fader, scuse me. My wife she catch bad fever. No one single person my home got, make funeral-feast. Please, my master, advance half-month's pay; gib four days' leave. I too much hurry come back.' Then he falls down, clasps my feet, calls me his father, brother; gets my consent to be absent, handles the rupees, and is off like a shot; not of course to his mother's obsequies, for the old harrihan has either been buried or burned years ago, or even now is all alive and kicking; but to some spun-out native theatricals, nautch, or *tamasha* (entertainment) in Black Town, where he feasts, drinks, and sleeps, and for a week at least I see his face no more.

History repeats itself; so does Sam. Months and months have passed; I am away from the neighbourhood of the Presidency town, and on the cool Neilgherry Hills. Enters one morning my man into my sitting-room, a letter in his hand, written in Tamil, and which he asks me to read, well knowing that I can't, that except a very few of the commonest words of the language, which I speak with an uncertain not to say incorrect idea of their meaning, the tongue of his forebears, scriptural and oral, is to me Chaldee or Arabic.

'Well! what's up now?' I say. 'Ennah?' airing one of the expressions I know.

'Master can see self. My uncle he send chit [note]; just now tappal-man [postman] bring. He write, say: "Sam! you plenty quick come Madras." He put inside letter one five-rupee government note. Sahib can see. He tell me no one minute lose; take fire-road [railway]; too soon come; plenty, plenty trouble. My mudder dead.'

'You awful blackguard!' I exclaim. 'Your mother dead—dead again! Look here—look here!' And I turn up my diary and shew him, under date August 9, 186—, nearly two years past and gone: 'Sam's mother reported dead for the second time by Sam, &c.'

Then he slinks away discomfited; and I hear him in his smoky kitchen growling and grumbling, and no doubt anathematising me and mine past, present, and future.

My first introduction to Sam was after this wise. I had come down from Bombay to Bepore with troops in a small steamer, and Mr Sam, who had either deserted or been sent away from the Abyssinian Expedition, in which he had been a camp-follower, was also a passenger in the same ship. Of this craft a word *en passant*, for I have to this day a lively and by no means pleasant olfactory recollection of her. She was the dirtiest

vessel in which I ever put foot; guiltless of paint from keel to truck; all grime, coal-soot, and tar from stem to stern. She had but recently taken a cargo of mules to Annesley Bay; and but scant if any application of water and deodorants had followed the disembarkation of the animals. The 'muley' flavour still therefore clung closely to bulkhead and planking; it hung about cordage and canvas; it penetrated saloon and sleeping-berth; it even overpowered the smell of the rancid grease with which pistons and wheels were lubricated. Worthy Captain B—— the skipper assured us that deck and hold, sides and bulwarks, had been well scoured in Bombay; but as the old salt's views of scrubbing, judging from his personal appearance, were infinitesimally limited, we opined that the ship's ablution had been as little as was that of its commander's diurnal tub.

But to return to Sam. The poor fellow was wandering about the streets of Beypore coinless and curry-and-rice-less, when he stumbled upon me. He was seeking, he told me, from some good Samaritan of an officer, a free convoy to Madras as his servant; and as I happened to be in a position entitled to passes for some three or four followers at government expense, I was enabled to pour oil and wine into Sam's wounds, and without even the disbursement to mine host the assistant-quartermaster-general, of the traditional 'tuppence,' to get him across from terminus to terminus—some four hundred long miles—and without once casting eyes on him. But at Lucifer's hotel in Madras where I stayed—What a memory of mosquitoes, fleas, and other nimble insects doth it bring! What a night-band of croaking frogs and howling jackals it kept! What packs of prowling pariah dogs and daringly thieving crows congregated about its yards and outhouses! What repulsive nude mendicants and fakeers strolled almost into its very verandahs! What a staff of lazy sweepers, slow-footed 'boys,' and sleepy punkah-pullers crawled about it generally! And last, though not least, what a wretched 'coolie-cook' superintended its flesh-pots, from which not even the every-day stereotyped prawn curry, boiled sear-fish, and grilled *morghes* (fowl) could creditably and palatably issue. At this Stygian caravanserai then, Sam, whom I thought I had bid adieu to for ever and a day on the railway platform, turns up again clean and smirky, salaams, asks for permanent employment, produces a thick packet of highly laudatory characters (mostly, I had no doubt, either fabricated by a native scribe in the Thieves' Bazaar at Black Town, or borrowed for the occasion from some other brother-butler), gets engaged; and from that moment, both figuratively and literally, begins to eat my salt. Nor did the saline feasting fail to give him a taste for liquor—for alcoholic, decidedly alcoholic were Sam's proclivities. He drank at all times and in all places; but his favourite day and locality was Tuesday, at the weekly market of the cantonment. Then and there he imbibed right royally, and staggering home—the coolies with the supplies following him as tipsy as himself—went straight to his mat-spread *charpoy* (bedstead).

'Hello, Sam!' I exclaim; 'at it again; drunk as usual from *shandy* [market].'

'No, shar! Dis time no shrunk! Shun too mush hot! Splenshy head pain gib! Too mush make shake, shagger, shar! No, mash-err, no!

Sham not shrunk! Plenty shick! Shmall glass brandy—all right, shar!'

But I decline to add 'the sum of more to that which hath too much,' and I leave Sam to sober himself as he best can, and which, truth to say, he quickly does.

In the way of intoxicants nothing came amiss to my man's unfastidious palate. He had no particular 'vanity,' like Old Weller's friend the red-nosed Shepherd; Hennessy's brandy, Kinahan's whisky, Boord's gin, Bass's ale, Guinness's stout, champagne, sherry, claret—all and each were equally acceptable; and failing these European liquors, then the vile palm-toddy and killing mango-spirit of the neighbouring native stills supplied their place. Bar the toddy and mango stuff, which were cheap and easily obtained, Sam did not disburse much for his wine-cellar; master's sideboard and stores, guard them as he would, came cheaper and handier. Every bottle, somehow or other, got 'other lips' than mine and my friends' applied to it, and its contents went into and warmed other 'hollow hearts' than ours. Sam laid an embargo on and helped himself from all. He it is, I fancy, to whom Aliph Cheem alludes in his Lay of Ind entitled *The Faithful Abboo*, that trusty servant who, habitually stealing his master's liquor, and accusing his brother-domestics, got caught and half-poisoned by mistaking in his prowls Kerosine for Old Tom. A misadventure not unlike befell Sam; but in that instance he did not 'strike oil,' but came upon a very nauseating dose of tartar emetic, and was 'plenty sick' and 'plenty shame' for some hours after.

Another predilection of my factotum's was tobacco, which he smoked without ceasing, and without the least regard to quality or fabric. 'Long-cut or short-cut' to him 'were all the same.' But as I did not happen to be addicted to the 'nicotian weed' Sam could not draw on any resources of mine, but had to depend on his own means, supplemented by the surreptitious abstraction of Trichys and Manillas, of Latakia and Bird's-eye, from the boxes and pouches of my chum and visitors.

Every native gambles; so it could hardly be expected that Sam should differ from his brethren in this respect. In the words of the old ditty anent Ally Croker:

He'd game till he lost the coat from his shoulder.

I don't think he cared much for cards or dice; but the game that he delighted in was played with a red and white checkered square of cloth, and with round pieces like draughtsmen. Whenever the advent of a friend and opportunity served, down the two squatted with this board between their legs, and a pile of copper pieces of money by their sides; and so intent would they be on their play, that nothing short of a gentle kick, or tap on the head, would arouse them to master's wants and needs.

My readers will naturally inquire why, with all these delinquencies, Sam so long remained my henchman. Well, first, had I discharged him, another and probably greater robber would have stepped into his shoes, and bazaar accounts and inroads on alcohol and tobacco would have remained undiminished. 'They all do it,' so better the devil I knew, than the devil whose acquaintance I would have to make. Again, Sam had his

redeeming points; he was, as I have said before, clean, handy, and, deft at the creature comforts which, having appetisingly compounded, he could serve up with taste and elegance. Then he was a good nurse; and during a serious illness that befell me at one of the vilest stations in Madras, he tended me closely and carefully, keeping a watchful eye and a ready stick on punkah-pullers and vettors of kus-kus lattes (scented grass mats), without the cooling aid of which the heat of that grilling July would have been my death on that fever-bed. Once more, on those military inspections which fell to my lot, and which had to be undertaken partly over the Nizam's very sandy and rough highways, and in those close comfortless bone-breaking vehicles called *byle-nibbs* (bullock-carts), my man became invaluable. Seated on the narrow perch alongside the almost garmentless and highly odiferous native driver, he urged him on by promises of 'backsheesh' and cheroots; he helped to whip and tail-twist the slow-footed oxen; he roused up lazy *byle-wallahs* (bullock-men) sleeping in their hovels, and assisted them in driving from the fields and in yoking to the cart refractory and kicking cattle. He stirred up with the long pole the *poons* (keepers) in charge of the road-side travellers' bungalows at which we halted, aiding these officials in chasing, slaughtering, and 'spatch-cooking' the ever-waiting-to-be-killed-and-cooked gaunt and fleshless *morghes* (fowl); he saw that the chatties for the bath were not filled with the very dirtiest of tank water; that the numerous and hard-biting insects, out and taking the air from their thickly populated homes in the crevices of cane-bottomed chair and bedstead, met with sudden and violent death; and lastly, that no man's hand but his own should be put into master's money-bag and stores.

But as all things come to an end, more or less, so did Sam's career with me actually terminate. My wife and family came 'out' from England. The 'Mem Saahb' sometimes even the 'Misses Saahb' took bazaar 'count; the current bachelor rates for chillies, cocoa-nuts, first and second sorts *urice*, gram, and such-like necessities underwent a fall. Sam's occupation and gain were gone. He quitted my homestead under this new and unprofitable régime. 'I discharge you, sar!' said he; and away he went, I know not where.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE

CHAPTER XL—AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

THE *De Vere Arms* at Peabworth, fourth-rate hotel though it necessarily was in a place where any hotel of the first or even of the second magnitude would have been as an oak in a flower-pot, was well and neatly kept. There was the commercial connection, and there was the county connection, both dear to the landlord, but on grounds wholly dissimilar. Biggles had been butler to the present, under-butler and knife-boy to the late Earl of Wolverhampton; and had he but had his own way, the *De Vere Arms* would have been strictly the family hotel which its address-cards proclaimed it, and the obnoxious word 'commercial' would have found no place there.

Mr Biggles, however, was in the position of one

of those unfortunate managers of English country theatres who tell their friends, perhaps truly, that they would play nothing, save the legitimate drama, if they could help it. They cannot help it, and scared by the dismal spectre of Insolvency, they shelve Shakspeare in favour of newer idols of the public. So did Biggles and worthy Mrs B. to boot lay themselves out in practice to secure the lucrative custom of the ready-money, constantly moving, commercial gentlemen, while in theory devoting all their loyalty to those of their patrons who came in their own carriages, with armorial bearings on their panels and liveried servants on the driving-seat.

To this hostelry was borne, in Sir Gruntley Pigbury's carriage, the insensible form of Jasper Denizil, supported by the sturdy arm of Captain Progers, while little Dr Aulfus, on the opposite seat, kept the patient's nerveless wrist between his own thin fingers all the way from the race-course to the inn. Then Jasper, amidst spasmodic gaspings from the landlady and sympathetic exclamations from the chambermaids, was carried into the *De Vere Arms* and established in one of the best rooms, whence were summarily dislodged the effects of some well-to-do customer who had had a horse in the race, but who was unlikely under the circumstances to resent the invasion of his apartment. Jack Progers and the doctor seemed to have taken joint possession of the invalid; the former as *prochain ami* (and it is to the credit of such *me'er-do-wells* as Captain Progers that the very wildest of them never do leave a friend untended in a scrape), and the other professionally.

Other friends came not. Lord Harrogate did indeed tap at the door, and so did four or five officers of the Lancer regiment, but contented themselves with an assurance that Jasper was in no immediate danger. And when Blanche Denizil's tearful entreaties induced the Earl to solicit admittance to the sick-room for her at least, the surgeon went out and politely deprecated her entrance. Anything which might excite the patient should, he truly said, be as far as possible avoided. It was not exactly possible just yet to ascertain the amount of damage done; but he, the doctor, anticipated no serious consequences. And with this assurance the poor sister was compelled to be content. They say that every educated man of fifty is a fool or a physician. Jack Progers had seen the light some half-century since, and his worst enemies—the men whose cash he pounced at play—would not have taxed him with folly.

'Now, doctor,' he said quietly, 'don't you think the best we can do for the poor fellow is to get his left shoulder into the socket again before the muscles stiffen?'

The surgeon winced. He knew by the cursory examination he had made that no bones—unless it might be the collar-bone, an injury to which is not always promptly ascertained—were broken; but here, annoying circumstance! was a disloca-

tion which he had left to be discovered by an outsider to the profession.

'Bless my soul!' he exclaimed, adjusting his spectacles, 'so it is. We have no time to lose.'

As it was, time enough had been lost by bringing about a contraction of the muscles, that rendered it necessary to call in the aid of James the waiter and Joe the boots, before the hurt shoulder could be reinstated in its normal position.

The pain of the operation roused Jasper from his stupor. He moaned several times and stirred feebly to and fro, and when the wrench was over, opened his eyes and gazed with a bewildered stare about him. Very pale and ghastly he looked, lying thus, with the blood slowly oozing from a cut on his right temple, and his hair stained and matted. They sprinkled water on his face and put brandy to his lips; but he merely groaned again, and his eyes closed.

'That's a very ugly knock on the temple; I hope there's no more mischief,' said the doctor in a whisper, but speaking more openly than medicine-men, beside a patient's bed, often speak to the laity.

Jack Progers shook his head. 'He was a man of experience, and had in his time seen some prompt and easy recoveries, and other cases in which there was no recovery at all. It was with some remorse that he looked down at the bruised and helpless form lying on the bed. His heart had been case-hardened by the rubs of a worldly career, but there was a soft spot in it after all, and it was with sincere joy that he saw at length the sick man's eyes open with a glance of evident recognition, while a wan smile played about his lips.

'I say, Jack,' said Jasper feebly, 'we're in a hole, old man, after all.' Then he fainted.

'Nothing the matter with his reason, thank goodness! It was the shock to the brain I feared the most for him,' said the doctor, as again brandy was administered.

The regular clock-work routine of social machinery must go on in despite of accidents, and accordingly the down-train reached Peabworth at 3.40 (or, to tell the truth, a few minutes behind time) with its usual punctuality. There was no omnibus, whether from the *De Vere Arms* or from the opposition or *White Hart* hotel, in waiting at the station, wherefore the few arrivals had to consign their bales and bags and boxes of samples to the wheelbarrows of porters, for conveyance to whichever house of entertainment they designed to patronise. Amongst these was a thickset middle-aged man, with trim whiskers, a dust-coloured overcoat, a slim umbrella, and a plump black bag, which he preferred to carry as he trudged from the station to the hotel.

There was nothing very noteworthy about the new-comer, who was neatly dressed in black, and wore a hat that was just old enough to have lost its first tell-tale gloss, except that he had evidently striven to look some years younger than the parish register would have proclaimed him. Thus the purplish tint of his thick whiskers and thinned hair, heedfully brushed and parted so as to make the most of it, savoured of art rather than nature. His cravat too, instead of being black, was what haberdashers call a scarf of blue silk, of a dark shade certainly, but still blue, and was secured by

a massive golden horse-shoe. Glittering trinkets rattled at his watch-chain, and his boots were tighter and brighter than the boots of men of business usually are. There is or ought to be a sort of fitness between clothes and their wearer, but in the case of this traveller, obviously bound for the *De Vere Arms*, no such fitness existed. That cold gray eye, those deeply marked crow's-feet, the coarse mouth, and mottled complexion, consorted ill with the pretensions to dandyism indicated by a portion of their owner's attire. Altogether, the man might have been set down as a corn-doctor, a quack, a projector of bubble companies, or possibly an auctioneer whose hammer seldom fell to a purely legitimate bid in a fair market.

As the stranger drew near to the hotel, having inquired his way once or twice from such of the natives as the great attraction of the day had not allured to the race-course, a carriage dashed past him at a very fast pace indeed, and drew up with a jerk in front of the *De Vere Arms*. The gentleman who alighted from it, tall, and of a goodly presence, lingered for an instant in the doorway to give some order to his servants. As he did so, his eyes encountered those of the traveller freshly arrived by the train, and who by this time was beneath the pillars of the porch. Sir Sykes Denzil, for it was he whose carriage had just brought him in hot haste to the place where his son lay ill, started perceptibly and hesitated, then turned abruptly on his heel and disappeared within the hotel, greeted by the obsequious Mr and Mrs Biggles.

Recognition, as we can all avouch, is in the immense majority of cases simultaneous, one memory seeming as it were to take fire at the spark of recollection kindled in the other. In this instance such was not exactly what occurred. Yet the traveller with the bag was perfectly certain that he had seen before the tall gentleman who had started at the sight of him, and that a diligent searching of the mental archives would elicit the answer to the riddle.

'Have I written or telegraphed to order rooms here?' repeated the new arrival testily, after the flippant waiter who came, flourishing his napkin, to see what the stranger wanted. 'No, I have not. And to judge by the size of your town, my friend, and the general look of affairs, I should say that on any other day of the year but this such a precaution would be wholly superfluous.'

The waiter, who had been slightly puffed up by the ephemeral vogue of Peabworth and its chief hotel, took the rebuke meekly. 'Would you step into the coffee-room, sir?' he said. 'I'll ask Mrs Biggles about accommodation likely to be vacant. Any name I could mention, sir?'

'Name—yes, Wilkins,' returned the traveller, pushing open the door of the coffee-room, in which, at various tables, some dozen of sporting-men were making a scrambling meal. One or two of these looking up from their plates, nodded a greeting, with a 'How d'ye do, Wilkins?' or 'How goes it, old fellow?' salutations which the recipient of them returned in kind. Then the waiter bustled in to say, more respectfully than before, that so soon as No. 28 should be vacated by a gentleman leaving by the 6.25 train, it would be at the disposal of Mr Wilkins. Further, here was a note for Mr Wilkins; into whose hand he

fear, in the steeplechase to-day, and I have been called here to see him, where he lies, in this very hotel.' And the baronet moved towards the door.

'Hurt, is he?' exclaimed Mr Wilkins, with inconsiderate roughness. 'Ah, then, I shall look to you, Sir Sykes, to indemnify me in case'—

Then came an awkward pause. The solicitor was a remarkably plain-spoken man, but he did not quite like to say, 'in case your son's accident prove fatal,' and so stopped, and left his eloquent silence to complete his words. Sir Sykes, with his hand on the door, turned, astonished, upon the attorney.

'What, pray, have you to do with the illness or the recovery of Captain Denzil?' he asked in evident ill-humour. He had borne up to this with Mr Wilkins, but the lawyer's interference with regard to his son appeared to him in the light of a gratuitous piece of insolence.

'Simply,' returned Mr Wilkins, thrusting his hand into an inner pocket of his coat, 'because I am the holder of certain acceptances, renewed, renewed afresh, and finally dishonoured; acceptances amounting, with expenses, to a gross amount of—shall we say some eleven or twelve thousand, Sir Sykes? Nearer the twelve than the eleven, I suspect. A flea-bite of course to a gentleman of your fortune, but a very important sum to a plain man like yours truly.'

'I have been put to heavy expense, very heavy, for my son's debts,' said Sir Sykes, almost piteously. 'I have paid every'—

'Now, my very good sir,' interrupted the attorney, 'don't, I beg you, don't fall into the common error of fathers, and imagine that your own particular son is either a miracle of ingenuous candour or a prodigal worse than his neighbours. You think that you've paid all his liabilities, Sir Sykes, and no doubt you have paid all you knew of. But as a man of the world, if not as a parent, you ought to be aware that nobody ever did tell all that he owed—excess of modesty, perhaps! They always leave a margin, these interesting penitents; and in this case, as you will see by these documents' (and Mr Wilkins produced several pieces of stamped paper), 'the margin is tolerably ample.'

The baronet was now thoroughly roused to wrath. He strode to and fro with frowning brow and hands that were fast clenched together, then walked to the window and stood still, idly tapping the panes with one white finger, on which there glinted a great diamond that had been an heirloom at Carbery Chase before ever a Denzil crossed its threshold.

'I'll not give him a shilling or leave him a shilling!' he said in a voice that quivered with anger. 'Carbery Chase is my very own, and I can deal with it as I please. My daughters at any rate have deserved better of me than that thankless graceless boy.'

Sir Sykes, under the influence of this new emotion, seemed to have forgotten the lawyer's presence, or merely to regard Mr Wilkins in the light of the impartial Chorus in a Greek tragedy; but the attorney, who was by no means pleased by the turn which the affair seemed to be taking, intervened.

'Come, come, Sir Sykes. It's natural that you should be annoyed at having such a heavy bill presented, when you thought it settled. But

between ourselves, boys will be boys. The captain has turned over a new leaf, and rely on it he will be a credit to you yet. I've a pretty wide acquaintance amongst wild young gentlemen of his kind, and I give you my word I don't know one who is more wide-awake. He had paid his 'prentice fees, and that smartly; but I expect before I die to hear of him as an ornament to the bench of magistrates and perhaps a county member. As for these bills and notes of hand'—

'I'm not liable for a sixpence!' exclaimed Sir Sykes petulantly. 'My son may go through the Court if he chooses, and perhaps will learn a wholesome lesson from the exposure, which'—

'Fie, fie, Sir Sykes!' broke in the lawyer. 'A coat of whitewash, believe me, sticks to a youngster's back to that extent that no amount of scrubbing can get rid of it. Fume and fret as you please, you know, and I know, that you mean Captain Jasper to have Carbery after you, and to keep the place in the Denzil line. Better so, than to have so fine an estate sold or cut in two for division between your daughters' husbands. And the captain won't bear the 'bloody hand' in his escutcheon the better because he has been made an insolvent in his youth. As for these claims, I don't press for an immediate settlement; not I; I don't exact my pound of flesh down on the nail, Sir Sykes.'

There was a hard struggle in the baronet's breast. Time had been given him for reflection, and he had used it. To hear of his son's extravagance, of his son's deceit, and from such lips, was bad enough. To be compelled to endure the familiarity of the lawyer's manner was to have to swallow a still more bitter pill. He could remember Mr Wilkins of old, blunt and jocose certainly, but by no means so jauntily in his bearing as he now was, although Sir Sykes had not then been the rich county magnate he had blossomed. He felt, and writhed as he felt, that it was the attorney's sense of his hold upon him by reason of his knowledge of his past life, which had emboldened Mr Wilkins to deal with him as he had done. But the most provoking feature of the affair was that Sir Sykes felt that this man's advice, coarsely and offensively administered as it was, yet contained a solid kernel of truth. Jasper was by no means a model son. He had committed fearful follies, and incurred debts which even the Master of Carbery had thought twice before discharging. His profligacy was redeemed by no brilliant talents, softened by no affectionate qualities. There are spendthrifts who remain lovable to the last, as there are others who dazzle the world by the glitter of their wit or valour. To neither category did the graceless offspring of Sir Sykes belong. And yet, in spite of his occasional menaces on the subject of his will, the baronet felt that national manners and family pride combined to constitute a sort of moral entail, of which Jasper was to reap the benefit.

'I must see my son,' said Sir Sykes smoothly, after a pause; 'and when I have time to think over the matter, Mr Wilkins, I will write to you appointing as early an interview as possible. In the meantime I feel assured that you will see the propriety of not urging personally your claims on Captain Denzil in his present condition.'

Mr Wilkins was amenable itself. He would, but eat a morsel in the coffee-room, he said, and would then go back to London by the next train, con-

fidant that he could not leave his interests in better hands than those of Sir Sykes.

"The old address, sir! You used to know it well enough!" said the lawyer with a leer, as he took the hand which the baronet did not dare to refuse in sign of friendship; and so they parted.

COAL AND ITS PRODUCTS.

IN an article which appeared in this *Journal* in August 1876, entitled *The Age of the World*, we endeavoured to explain how coal was produced, and how it might be regarded simply as stored-up heat and light, derived from the sun ages ago.

Apart from the varied uses of coal in its ordinary state, we owe an immense deal to the products which by chemical means we obtain from it; and it is our purpose in this paper to briefly review these products, and to shew how we have adapted them to our several wants.

The manufacture of gas is undoubtedly the most important feature in the modern history of coal. Natural reservoirs of inflammable air exist in many parts of the world, and have in many cases been turned to profitable account. In China, for instance, the evaporation of salt has for many years been carried on by the heat obtained by the combustion of gas which issues from the ground. Streets and buildings there have also been lighted by the same means. In our own country too, such eruptions of natural gas—which have generally manifested themselves during the operation of well-boring—have not been uncommon. But the gas so obtained is not the same as that which we get from the distillation of coal, although it forms one of its chief constituents. It is commonly called marsh-gas, from its constant presence in bogs and places where decaying vegetable matter abounds. The treacherous Will o' the Wisp owes its origin to this gas. It also issues in large quantities from coal-beds, and diluted with air forms the dreadful compound called 'fire-damp.'

The first recorded experiment relating to the production of true coal-gas was as early as the year 1660, when a country clergyman distilled some coal, collected the gas in bladders, and burnt it from a jet, for the amusement of his friends. Although this very suggestive experiment was communicated to the Royal Society, no action seems to have been taken upon it until the beginning of the present century, when the matter seems to have attained a more practical form. At this time one or two factories in Manchester and Birmingham were for the first time lighted with gas. The idea of illuminating an entire town by means of a chemical vapour seems to have met with much ridicule, and it was found necessary to employ lecturers to go about the country to shew people how such an apparent impossibility could be carried out. However, in spite of much opposition, part of London was lighted by gas in 1812; and three years later, Paris adopted the same system. The delay in the acceptance of gas-making among the industrial arts was no doubt largely due to the expressed opinion of several eminent chemists and others, who considered that such a mode of lighting our towns could never be

realised, because of the supposed danger which it involved. Modern experience teaches us that it is at once the cheapest as well as the safest mode of illumination that we can as yet command. In the manufacture of gas, the coal is placed in iron retorts, which are subjected to a high temperature for about six hours, when the operation is finished, and the retorts are ready for a fresh charge. A residue of nearly pure carbon, in the form of coke, remains in the retort, whilst the varied products of the distillation are carried off by pipes into suitable receptacles. For the sake of convenience, we will at present name only three of these products—ammoniacal liquor, tar, and the gas itself. The first is the principal source of ammonia, one of the most useful substances known. It may be almost said of ammonia, as it has been remarked of sulphuric acid, that the prosperity of a country may be known by the quantity which it consumes. It is used by colour-makers, calico-printers, and in the manufacture of most of the textile fabrics; in cleansing and extracting grease from various kinds of cloth, in the preparation of leather, in galvanising iron, and in pewtering. The chemist would be almost helpless without its aid; whilst in medicine it is used in about twenty different forms as a most valuable stimulant. It is almost needless to say that ammonia was in general use long before the era of gas-manufacture, for life could hardly go on without it. In fact its very name is derived from its manufacture hundreds of years ago from animal refuse in a district of Libya where the deity Jupiter Ammon was worshipped. The old alchemists too obtained it from the distillation of deer's horns; hence one preparation of it is still called spirit of hartshorn. There are many other sources of ammonia, for its presence in nature is universal; but all have sunk into insignificance since the gas-works have yielded such plentiful supplies.

Coal-tar in its crude state is not of very great importance, its use being confined to such rough work as the water-proofing of boats and the painting of outhouses and the like. But in the hands of the chemist its applications cannot be lightly regarded, in fact its distillation is of sufficient importance to form a distinct branch of trade. In this process coal-tar is separated into three different products—naphtha (which in a rectified state is the benzol of commerce); heavy or creosote oil, which is used almost exclusively for the preservation of railway sleepers; and the residue pitch. The last is of great use to shipbuilders, and has more recently found employment in the preparation of asphalt roofing and paving. But naphtha is by far the most important of the three substances, if it were only for its use as a solvent for both india-rubber and gutta-percha. No doubt, failing this, other solvents for caoutchouc would have been found; but naphtha is a particularly cheap and effective menstruum for the purpose; and when we consider the varied uses to which india-rubber and gutta-percha are now applied—from elastic hose to submarine cables—we must acknowledge that naphtha is a valuable addition to our manufacturing resources. It is a significant circumstance that the date of the introduction of manufactured india-rubber (by Mr Mackintosh) follows the general adoption of gas-lighting by only a few years. Previous to this, india-rubber was imported merely as a curiosity, its first use being to oblite-

rate pencil-marks, for which purpose it was once advertised in London at the modest price of six shillings per square inch.

Besides its use as a solvent, benzol is of particular importance in yielding, when treated with nitric acid, a substance called aniline. The discovery of aniline is one of the most remarkable triumphs of chemistry, as applied to the advancement of a manufacturing industry. (Before the date of coal-tar it was obtained from indigo, and the name it bears is the Portuguese for that colour.) The production of aniline caused quite a revolution in the various trades which are dependent in any way upon the colour-manufacturer; for lithographers, paper-stainers, calico-printers, and especially dyers, owe their most brilliant tints to its aid. The various dyes which are now commonly retailed for household use are also derived from the same source. Aniline is an almost colourless liquid, of a peculiar vinous odour, which after exposure to the air, changes to a dark resinous matter. The treatment which it undergoes in producing the various colours (and nearly every colour of the rainbow can now be obtained from it), is of too complicated a nature to be of any interest to the general reader. Magenta, the advent of which some years back many of our readers will remember, was the first aniline dye which appeared. The other colours have followed in quick succession, nearly all of them being the subjects of one or more patents. It is questionable whether all these colours are strictly permanent; but it is a pleasing thought that the hues which in one form or another existed at a period long before mankind had a place in nature, are now reproduced for man's delight and benefit.

Another very important product of gas-tar is carbolic acid, which is also largely employed for dyeing purposes. Its value as a disinfectant is too well known to need recapitulation here; but we may mention that its use as a preventive of disease was most abundantly proved during the last epidemic among our cattle. It is in general use in our hospitals, not only as a disinfectant, but also as an antiseptic both in the dressing of wounds and in the treatment of various skin diseases. Carbolic acid also yields a substance called picric acid, which, on account of its explosive properties when combined with potassium, has been proposed as a substitute for gunpowder. There are many other substances derived from the distillation of coal-tar, but at present they are only of interest to the experimental chemist.

A ton of coals will produce a chaldron of coke, twelve gallons of tar, ten gallons of ammoniacal liquor, and nearly ten thousand feet of gas. A consideration of these figures, with a due regard to what we have said as to the value of the various chemical products obtained by distillation, will enable our readers to understand why gas companies can shew such good balance-sheets. Much has been written as to the possible exhaustion, after one or two centuries, of the British coal-fields. This is a question upon which it is next to impossible to form any reliable opinion. Should the coal-supply actually fail, it is more than probable that as science is extended, a new source of light and heat may be developed. A cheap and ready means of producing electricity, as we have in a former article endeavoured to shew,

would at once solve the problem, and it is within the bounds of reason that to this agency the future races of the earth will look for the two most common necessities of existence.

MALAPROPOS.

CHARLES DICKENS once wrote to a friend: 'I have distinguished myself in two respects lately. I took a young lady unknown down to dinner, and talked to her about the Bishop of Durham's nepotism in the matter of Mr Cheese. I found she was Mrs Cheese. And I expatiated to the member for Marylebone, Lord Fermoyle—generally conceiving him to be an Irish member—on the contemptible character of the Marylebone constituency and Marylebone representatives.' Two such mishaps in one evening were enough to reduce the most brilliant talker to the condition of the three 'insides' of the London-bound coach, who beguiled the tedium of the journey from Southampton by discussing the demerits of William Cobbett, until one of the party went so far as to assert that the object of their denunciations was a domestic tyrant, given to beating his wife; when, much to his dismay, the solitary lady passenger, who had hitherto sat a silent listener, remarked: 'Pardon me, sir; a kinder husband and father never breathed; and I ought to know, for I am William Cobbett's wife!'

Mr Giles of Virginia and Judge Duval of Maryland, members of Congress during Washington's administration, boarded at the house of a Mrs Gibbon, whose daughters were well on in years, and remarkable for talkativeness. When Jefferson became President, Duval was Comptroller of the Treasury, and Giles a senator. Meeting one day in Washington, they fell to chatting over old times, and the senator asked the Comptroller if he knew what had become of 'that cackling old maid, Jenny Gibbon.' 'She is Mrs Duval, sir,' was the unexpected reply. Giles did not attempt to mend matters, as a certain Mr Tuberville unwisely did. This unhappy blunderer resembled the Irish gentleman who complained that he could not open his mouth without putting his foot in it. Happening to observe to a fellow-guest at Durraven Castle, that the lady who had sat at his right hand at dinner was the ugliest woman he had ever beheld; the person addressed expressed his regret that he should think his wife so ill-looking. 'I have made a mistake,' said the horrified Tuberville; 'I meant the lady who sat on my left.' 'Well, sir, she is my sister,' was the response to the well-intentioned fib; bringing from the desperate connoisseur of beauty the frank avowal: 'It can't be helped, sir, then; for if what you say be true, I confess I never saw such an ugly family in the course of my life!'

An honest expression of opinion perhaps not so easily forgiven by the individual concerned, as that wrung from Mark Twain, who, standing right before a young lady in a Parisian public garden, cried out to his friend: 'Dan, just look

at this girl; how beautiful she is!' to be rebuked by 'this girl' saying in excellent English: 'I thank you more for the evident sincerity of the compliment, sir, than for the extraordinary publicity you have given it!' Mark took a walk, but did not feel just comfortable for some time afterward.

One of the humorist's countrymen made a much more serious blunder. He was a married man. Going into the kitchen one day, a pair of soft hands were thrown over his eyes, a kiss was imprinted on his cheek. He returned the salute with interest, and as he gently disengaged the hands of his fair assailant, asked: 'Mary, darling, where is the mistress?' and found his answer in an indignant wife's face. 'Mary darling' had gone out for the day, and the lady of the house intended by her affectionate greeting to give her lord a pleasant surprise. He got his surprise; whether he thought it a pleasant one he never divulged, but that kitchen knew Mary no more.

A stout hearty-looking gentleman one day made his way from the dock-side at Plymouth to the deck of a man-of-war newly arrived from abroad, and desired to be shewn over the ship. Most of the officers were on shore, and the duty of playing cicerone devolved upon a young midshipman. He made the most of his opportunity, and to have a lark at the expense of the elderly gentleman as he shewed him round, he told him how the capstan was used to grind the ship's coffee, the eighteen-ton guns for cooling the officers' champagne, the mainyards for drying the Admiral's Sunday shirts, and many other things not generally known. When the gentleman had seen all he wanted to see, he handed a card to his kind instructor, saying: 'Young gentleman, you are a very smart youth indeed, and full of very curious information; and I trust that you will see there is no mistake in this card of mine finding its way to your captain.' The midshipman glanced at the bit of pasteboard and read thereon the name 'Ward Hunt;' but before he could thoroughly realise the situation, the First Lord of the Admiralty, with a parting nod and pleasant smile, had gone.

Another story, illustrating the awkward results that come of letting the tongue run freely under a misapprehension regarding other folk's identity, is told of a London tailor. An aristocratic customer noted for dressing in anything but aristocratic fashion, called to pay his bill. The tailor's new manager, after receipting the account, handed it back with a sovereign, saying: 'There's a sovereign for yourself, and it's your own fault it isn't two. You don't wear out your master's clothes half quick enough. He ought to have had double the amount in the time; it would be worth your while to use a harder brush.'

'Well, I don't know,' said his lordship, smiling; 'I think my brush is a pretty hard one too; his lordship complains of it anyhow.'

'Pooh! Hard! Not a bit of it! Now I'll put you up to a dodge that'll put many a pound in your pocket. You see this piece of wood—now that's roughened on purpose. You take that, and give your master's coat a good scrubbing with it about the elbows and shoulders every day; and give the trousers a touch about the knees, and it will be a good five pounds a year in your pocket. We shan't forget you.'

'You are very kind,' quoth the enlightened

gentleman. 'I will impart your instructions to my valet, though I fear while he remains in my service he will not be able to profit by them, as I shall not trouble you with my custom. I wish you good-day.'

We read in Lord Eldon's Journal: 'The most awkward thing that ever occurred to me was this. Immediately after I was married I was appointed Deputy Professor of Law at Oxford, and the Law Professor sent me the first lecture, which I had to read immediately to the students, and which I began without knowing a single word that was in it. It was upon the statute applying to young men running away with maidens. Fancy me reading with about one hundred and fifty boys and young men all giggling at the Professor! Such a tittering audience no one ever had.' The comical coincidence may have been an accidental one; but as the Law Professor must, like the students, have known that his deputy ran away with his Bessie, the chances are against it. The great lawyer was fated to be reminded of the romantic episode of his life. A client whose daughter had been stolen from him, insisted upon the jury being told that a man who could run away with another man's daughter was a rascal and a villain, and deserved to be hanged. 'I cannot say that,' said Scott. 'And why not, Lawyer Scott—why not?' inquired the irate father. 'Because I did it myself!' was the unanswerable reply.

After doing his office for a young couple, a clergyman was inveigled into proposing the health of bride and bridegroom at the wedding breakfast. He wound up a neat little speech by expressing the hope that the result of the union of the happy pair might prove strictly analogous to that of the bride's honoured parents. The groom looked angry, the bride went into hysterics, the bridesmaids blushed and became interested in the pattern of the carpet, the master of the house blew his nose with extraordinary violence, and the speaker sat down wondering at the effect he had created; till his better-informed neighbour whispered that the lady was not the daughter of the host and hostess, but a niece who came to live with them when her mother and father were divorced.

During Mr Gladstone's Premiership, Sir George Pollock called one morning in Downing Street to thank the Prime-minister for making him governor of the Tower. A cabinet council had just assembled; but rather than keep the veteran waiting, Mr Gladstone invited him into the council-chamber and introduced him to his colleagues. Sir George entertained his new acquaintances with a tedious story about a nobleman who had been detected cheating at cards, ending his narration with: 'They turned him out of all the clubs he belonged to; even the Reform would have nothing more to say to him!' A way of proving the enormity of the card-player's offence that must have pleased his hearers amazingly, since all or nearly all of them were members of that famous Liberal club.

The old governor sincerely meant what his words implied. Such is not always the case with utterers of malapropos things. When a note was handed to Dr Fletcher in his pulpit intimating that the presence of a medical gentleman, supposed to be in the church, was urgently required elsewhere,

the preacher read the letter out, and as the doctor was making for the door, fervently ejaculated: 'May the Lord have mercy on his patient!' A Scotch minister exchanging pulpits with a friend one Sunday, was accosted after service by an old woman anxious to know what had become of her 'ain minister.' 'Oh,' said he, 'he is with my people to-day.' 'Indeed, indeed,' said the dame; 'they'll be getting a treat the day!' As flattering a remark as that of the wife of a popular lecturer, who on her lord telling her he was going to lecture at Sheffield, exclaimed: 'I'm so glad; I always hated those Sheffield people.'

Epitaph writers sometimes display a talent for this kind of *double-entendre*. A couple of specimens will suffice. The first from Arbroath, running: 'Here lie the bodies of John, William, Robert, and David Matthews, who all died in the hope of a glorious resurrection—excepting David.' The other from an American burying-ground:

Here lies the mother of children five;
Two are dead and three are alive;
The two that are dead preferring rather
To die with their mother than live with their father.

Although a high authority insists that the lunatic and the lover are of imagination all compact, it would not enter an ordinary lover's head to tell his mistress that loving her was synonymous with madness, as Steele did when he wrote to his dear lovely Prue: 'It is the hardest thing in the world to be in love and yet attend business. As for me, all who speak to me found me out, and I must lock myself up, or other people will do it for me'; but fair Mistress Scurlcock doubtless took the dubious flattery in as good part as the great animal painter took the king of Portugal's odd greeting: 'Ah, Sir Edwin, I am glad to see you; I'm so fond of beasts.' An unpleasant way of putting the thing was innocently adopted by the New York car-driver, who, blissfully ignorant that his interlocutor was Mr Beecher, replied to that gentleman's query whether he did not think it possible to dispense with running the cars all day on Sunday: 'Yes, sir, I do; but there's no hope for it so long as they keep that Beecher theatre open in Brooklyn; the cars have to run to accommodate that.'

An American newspaper says: 'The enthusiastic choir-master who adopted *Hold the Fort* as a processional hymn, has been dismissed by the minister, who considered it personal when the choir burst forth:

See the mighty host advancing,
Satan leading on!

A similar objection might have been raised to the Maine county commissioners quoting Watts's lines:

Ye sinners round, come view the ground
Where you will shortly lie,

when inviting certain lawyers to inspect the new court-house; although they had less reason to complain than Lord Kenyon and Justice Rooke, who while on circuit, came one Sunday to a little village just as the good folks were going to church; an example the two judges followed. Anxious to shew his appreciation of the unexpected honour, the parish clerk searched for a suitable psalm to sing before the service; and at the proper time

gave out the first two verses of the fifty-eighth psalm, and the congregation sang:

Speak, O ye judges of the earth,
If just your sentence be;
Or must not innocence appeal
To heaven from your decree.
Your wicked hearts and judgments are
Alike by malice swayed;
Your gripping hands, by mighty bribes,
To violence betrayed.

Here the congregation awoke to the meaning of what they were singing, and left the clerk and the children to offend the ears of the legal dignitaries with:

To virtue, strangers from the womb,
Their infant steps went wrong;
They prattled slander, and in lies
Employed their lisping tongue.
No serpent of parched Afric's breed
Does ranker poison bear;
The drowsy adder will as soon
Unlock his sullen ear.

The performance unlocked the tongues of the astonished judges at anyrate; and the churchwardens had some difficulty in convincing them that the apparent insult arose out of the stupidity of the well-meaning clerk.

THEODOR MINTROP.

'THE poor world is almost six thousand years old, and in all this time there was not any man died in his own person, namely, in a love-cause.'

I cannot help recalling Rosalind's words as I look at the photograph before me; the history of its original so completely disproves her saucy speech. In my hand I hold the likeness of a man of forty or thereabouts, with a noble square forehead arching above deep thoughtful eyes, a large beardless face surrounded by a heavy growth of long hair, and a thickset form denoting great personal strength. A superficial observer might call the homely portrait commonplace, and turn to gaze on the more aristocratic faces of his fellow-artists in the photographic album; but a careful scrutiny of the coarse irregular features and the broad brow impresses one with the feeling that this was no ordinary man; that a spirit dwelt within these steady eyes purer and mightier than usually falls to the lot of mortal man. But the closest inspection would still leave much untold. The indomitable energy, the heaven-sent genius, may be traced in his strong features and deep eyes; but the exquisite sensibility, the single-heartedness, the uncomplaining patience, would never be guessed.

But a short time has elapsed since he was one of us, and his story is still ringing in the hearts of his countrymen—a story so pathetic in its poverty and its triumph, so touching in its untimely close.

Theodor Mintrop, the original of the photograph, was born near the village of Werden in Westphalia. From his childhood he had an uncontrollable desire to draw, which brought nothing but censure from his elders, substantial *bauers* and petty farmers, who considered drawing an unpardonable waste of time. But the talent was not to be crushed out. In spite of opposition and discouragement, in spite of his daily hard work on his father's farm, he practised his art whenever he had an opportunity;

at first sketching rough outlines on whitewashed walls, and when he could afford it, buying pencils and paper. In time his fame as an artist spread among the simple peasantry, and even beyond his own limited circle. "The country Raphael," he was popularly called; and made a little money occasionally by painting signs for country inns, and pictures of the Virgin and Child for the Catholics. All this time he wrought in the fields at a labourer's usual avocations; and it was a hard horny hand that in his leisure moments wielded the pencil with such surprising genius. He was waiting—waiting patiently till the tide would turn—waiting till the time would come when he could study his art and devote himself wholly to it. And thus he might have spent his entire life, his genius, like an imprisoned bird, hummed in by sordid cares and toils, if one of these strange coincidences that so often bring the unexpected, had not occurred.

A celebrated artist, seeing some of Mintrop's drawings, was so struck by their merit, that he immediately set out for Werden, found Mintrop at the plough, and carried him back to his house in Düsseldorf, offering him every facility for studying thoroughly his beloved art.

The opportunity had come; but how long the country Raphael had waited for it! Thirty years had he repressed his ambition, and performed the duties of farm-labourer for his father and brother. No wonder a sad weariness can be traced on his features. In Düsseldorf, Mintrop went through the regular course of instruction, beginning at the very lowest class, where he, a man of thirty, sat on the same bench with young lads; but his great genius and intense application soon carried him through the class-rooms. His art had an amount of originality and freshness that seemed to breathe of his free country life at Werden. From his boyhood a great lover of fairy tales, there was a strain of grotesqueness in his works. His father, a man of an original turn of mind, had fostered his passion for the weird homely legends of the German peasantry; and to Theodor, in his imaginative youth, *kobolds* had peeped out of the earth, *vieses* had sung in the rivers. The fame of the country Raphael soon spread in Düsseldorf; art critics acknowledged his wonderful genius, and vied with one another in pointing out the grand simplicity and admirable power of his compositions. How did the untrained peasant, fresh from his rural life, bear all this homage! Simply and meekly. With reverence he regarded the wonderful new life around him, so much more polished, so much pleasanter than his old one; but the dignity of his art and his own self-respect saved him from being overborne by it. But no one guessed that under his homely and somewhat uncouth exterior such an appreciation for all that was fair and good in life existed, as the sequel of his life proved.

Behold him now at perhaps the zenith of his career; having attained the object of his desires, an artistic education; having in a few short years established a fame that many academical pupils of many years' standing had failed to win; surrounded by many friends, living in the home-circle of his first patron and dearest friend in that pleasant city on the Rhine. His future lay fair and unclouded before him, leading him on from triumph to still greater triumph. But inscrutable

are the ways of Providence; God's ways are not man's ways; and the tree that promised such glorious fruit was never to reach maturity.

To the house of Geselschap (the name of the artist who had befriended Mintrop, and in whose house he lived) came one fine summer a young lady-friend. In the free unstrained home society, Mintrop had much opportunity of becoming intimately acquainted with this young girl. He had been learning much of life as well as art since he came to Düsseldorf; but women in a higher rank than the peasants he had for thirty years been familiar with, were ever an object of peculiar interest and intense admiration to him; and the grace and amiability of this stranger soon made a powerful impression on him. For a whole long happy summer this fair young creature lived under the same roof with him, and treated the grave shy man with the playfulness and friendliness of a sister, wholly unaware of the passion she had unwittingly kindled. In short he, the hard-working country Raphael, engrossed in his art, which he pursued for itself, not for money (about which he was one of the most careless of mortals)—he, the rough Westphalian peasant, with hard hands and uncouth figure, had learned to love this gentle maiden, with all the strength of his noble patient heart.

That long happy summer passed, and the young lady returned to her friends. Shortly after, the announcement of her engagement to be married reached Düsseldorf, piercing the true heart that loved her so well. To commemorate her marriage, Mintrop composed a wonderful series of pictures, that will always link her name to his.

The "Love of King Heinzelmann" they were called; seventy scenes in all, in which he, in the guise of King Heinzelmann, following his beloved Johanna through every incident in daily life, protects and helps her as he would fain have done in reality. True to the traditions of his youth, numbers of quaint dwarfs with long beards, pointed caps, and trunk-hose, attend on the commands of their king; who is himself a strange weird vision with a wizened face, pointed cap, and magic wand, tipped by a burning eye. In a burgher household, these droll figures sweep and wash, bake and brew, throwing themselves into many strange contortions, in the service of Anna; the king ever with them, looking sadder and sadder; for as time goes on, a stranger from America falls in love with Johanna and carries her away across the sea. The poor gnome-king loves in vain; and when the day comes that Johanna and her lover sail away, he and his dwarfs stand sadly on the shore (for they may not cross the sea) watching the vessel till it fades from sight.

The fantastic legend is imbued with a strange humanity; and the ugly figure of the gnome-king touches our inmost sensibility with a thrill of pathos. Such was the love of Mintrop—intense, undying, and hopeless! Some things are almost too sad to bear speaking of, and the waste of affection that goes on in this world is one of them. Doubtless there were many girls in Düsseldorf equal to Johanna in every respect; but for Mintrop she was the only one, and yet she was another's.

Three years had passed since Mintrop worked his love into his art—throwing but a thin veil of

grotesqueness over his real feelings; and Johanna returned from afar with her husband. They settled in Westphalia; and Johanna, moved by the memories of old days, proposed that Mintrop should be godfather to their infant daughter. Three years were gone, and Mintrop thought he had conquered his hopeless love; but yet the request startles him, and he requires to struggle for composure before he can determine whether he shall agree to it or not. He goes, finds the comfortable home where his lost love resides, meets her and her husband and the various guests present at the ceremony. The priest comes, and the little soft baby is placed in his arms. He looks at his sleeping god-daughter as he somewhat awkwardly receives her, and the child slowly opens her large eyes, so like her mother's. A thrill runs through Mintrop's veins; all the old feelings, the old hopes and fears, rush through his mind with a force too cruel to be borne. He hastily places the child in its mother's arms, and hurries away from the scene.

Not long after, and Mintrop is dying. Some physical cause, the doctor assigns; but his friends know well what it is. His patient loving heart has borne too much. The intensity of his feelings has snapped the cord of life. As his breath leaves him, he thinks of his other love, his Art, and he sighs: 'Would I might live long enough to finish my work; otherwise, I am ready to die!' And thus the brave gentle spirit went forth to meet its Maker, regretting only that the promise of its youth was not fulfilled—the work not yet completed. Alas, alas, for human love, for human hopes and wishes! My eyes are wet as I trace these concluding lines; and the face in the photograph is hallowed by a strange sad interest.

Theodor Mintrop died at Düsseldorf in July 1870; and his sad story, as given above, speedily found its way into the German newspapers. In autumn 1871, a bronze bust erected to his memory was unveiled in the presence of thousands of spectators; and the poet Emil Rittershaus composed and recited a beautiful poem—a requiem to one who died of a broken heart.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE ramour mentioned in our last *Month* has been verified, and we now know that hydrogen and nitrogen have yielded to the power of the physicist, and that there is no longer, in our part of the universe, any such thing as a permanent gas. After Pictet in Geneva had led the way by liquefying oxygen, Cailletet followed in Paris with the other two; but Pictet has since gone farther, and has obtained liquid hydrogen in considerable quantity, and has produced solid particles of oxygen. In communicating these facts to a scientific body in Paris, Mr Dumas, the eminent chemist, stated to his hearers they might take it for granted that in swallowing a glass of water they were really drinking a metallic oxide.

Dr Angus Smith says in a paper 'On the Examination of Air,' read before the Royal Society, that there ought to be observatories for Chemical Climatology and Meteorology, in which the air

should be systematically examined, 'so as to obtain decidedly those bodies which have from the earliest times been supposed to exist in it, bringing with them, on certain occasions, the worst results.' But the process of examination, as at present carried on, is slow and troublesome; when a sure and easy way is found, then its adoption may become general. Dr Angus Smith is perhaps the first who has taken the subject in hand from this point of view. 'It is the more interesting,' he remarks, 'as he has sufficiently shewn that in the places examined, the organic ammonia has been in intimate relation with the gross death-rate. . . . It may be true that oxygen is the prime mover—producing in man animal life—a favourite idea for a chemist; but it may also be true that minute organisms cause a peculiar class of decomposition connected with mental or other activity, diseased or otherwise.'

Before the telephone has ceased to be a scientific novelty, America sends us news of another novelty called a phonograph. This instrument, the invention of Mr T. A. Edison, makes sound visible, and records it in a permanent form. You speak into a tube, and while doing so you work a handle which causes a cylinder to revolve; the sound of the voice causes a thin disk or diaphragm of metal to vibrate, as in the telephone; the vibrations actuate a steel point which, as it advances and recedes, makes impressions more or less deep in a band of tinfoil wound round the cylinder, and this band of tinfoil becomes the record of what has been spoken. Now comes the wonderful part of the process; for we are told that if the tinfoil so indented be applied to another instrument, called the 'transmitter,' consisting of a hollow tube with a paper diaphragm, then the original sounds will be reproduced, though with somewhat of a metallic tone. Turn the handle of the cylinder and you may have repetitions of the discourse until, in fact, the tinfoil is quite worn out. Casts of the indented tinfoil may, it is said, be taken in plaster of Paris, so that copies of spoken words could be sent to as many persons as may be desired.

This invention seems too questionable to allow of any one, even the inventor, forming an opinion as to its practical value. Fanciful conjectures may of course be made. A fugitive swindler, for example, may be arrested in a foreign city, and held fast until a foil of evidence spoken by one of his confederates might be sent out to convict him. Or a hardy young sheep-farmer in Australia might sing into his tube, puncturing his song on the sheet of foil, fold it neatly up, and send the graven song home to the girl he left behind him; and she, by applying the sheet to her own phonograph might, by proper manipulation, hear the tender ditty as often as she pleased.

While waiting for further developments, we venture to suggest that what is wanted by numbers of intellectual people who find the mechanical action of writing slow and irksome, is some kind of 'graphy' which will enable them at once to print their thoughts on paper without aid from pen or fingers.

Some months ago we mentioned the little torpedo boat *Lightning*, and her swift steaming, nineteen knots an hour. Her length is eighty-four feet, her width ten feet ten inches: and now we hear that fifteen similar vessels are to be built, and

that the builders promise a speed of twenty-five knots. Experiments have been made which prove that swiftness is an element of safety, for on firing a rifle-bullet through the bottom it was found that the water did not enter. In future it is thought that torpedoes will play an important part in naval warfare; and as has already been mentioned in recent papers in this *Journal*, a School has been established at Portsmouth in which their use is taught theoretically and practically. A further improvement is whispered in certain quarters—a torpedo boat which shall carry on her evolutions under water, and hook on torpedoes to the bottom of an enemy's ship without being discovered. Are we about to see in this a realisation of what has long been a dream among speculative inventors? Is naval warfare, from its hopelessly fatal nature to those engaged, to become an impossibility?

Communications addressed to the Société d'Encouragement pour l'Industrie Nationale, Paris, describe a method for preventing the deposit of soot in chimneys; but as yet no details are published: also an apparatus for stopping runaway horses (in harness), by completely closing the wipers; and a way to deaden the blows of a hammer moved by machinery. In this case, the anvil is supported on a float in a reservoir of water. Another subject is a tramway car in which compressed air is the motive-power, as proved during some months on the line between Courbevoie and Puteaux, and the Round Point in the Champs-Élysées. This car has room for thirty passengers, is served by a conductor, and a mechanician who has entire charge of the machinery, which with a number of iron tubes is all placed between the wheels, under the floor, where it causes no inconvenience to any one. A powerful air-pump at the starting station, forces air enough into the iron tubes for the journey to and fro, and the car travels smoothly and without noise or smoke, and can be stopped and started more readily than a horse-car. Mr Mékarski, the inventor of this car, has been thanked by the Société for having solved the problem of a locomotive which can be used with safety in crowded streets. Of course there are appliances for regulating the pressure of the air, and for preventing the deposit of hoar-frost in the tubes, consequent on rapid expansion of air; but for a description of these and other particulars we must refer to the *Bulletin* published by the Society.

Mr Coret has invented what he calls a self-acting thermo-signal which by ringing a bell makes known to all within hearing when an axle or any other part of an engine is over-heated. It is a small brass cylinder, containing a system of flexible metal disks, and a dilatible liquid, which is to be fixed to the part liable to over-heating. While all goes well the instrument makes no sign; but as the temperature rises the liquid dilates, forces out a small metal pin at the end of the cylinder, which, as the wheel revolves, strikes a bell, and thereby warns the attendants. Thus the necessity for constantly watching an indicator is avoided.

Other subjects brought before the same Society are—A description of a chimney which does not occasion loss of heat, by Mr Toulet, 38 Avenue de l'Observatoire, Paris—Specimens of harmless colours which may be used with varnish, oil, or water, and are described as durable and remarkably brilliant. They are available for many pur-

poses of decoration, but are specially intended, as they contain no poisonous element, for the colouring of children's toys. These new colours are derived from the substances known to chemists as eosin and fluorescin—And certain manufacturers who have carefully studied the material give an account of the capabilities of jute, from which we gather that by proper preparation of the yarns, remarkable effects of colour, of mottling, of light and shade, and also a velvety appearance can be produced. The process is described as very simple, and moderate in cost; so that applications of jute to decorative purposes hitherto not thought of may ere long become available.

It has been found by experiment that aniline black can be made to yield different colours: treated in one way it is a light violet, in another way it is a bluish pink, and in a third way it becomes blue.

Pure butter, as is stated in the *Journal* of the Chemical Society, contains from ninety to ninety-eight per cent. of pure butter fat and a small quantity of water. Its colour should be from yellowish white to reddish yellow, but this depends on the kind of fodder given to the cows, and may be produced by means of beetroot or other plants possessed of colouring properties. The colouring matter may be detected by treating the butter with strong alcohol. The melting-point of pure butter is from thirty to thirty-seven degrees, while artificial butter melts at from twenty-seven to thirty-one degrees. Substances used to increase the bulk and weight of butter are chalk, gypsum, oxide of zinc, starch, and so forth. These neither improve its flavour nor its wholesomeness. The agreeable smell of pure butter, with a slight suggestion of milk, is not easy to imitate by artificial means.

Now that chemists can avail themselves of the spectroscope in their researches, falsifications have but little chance of escaping detection. We learn from the same *Journal* that the colouring matters generally used in the adulteration of wine are—fuchsine, the preparations termed caramels, ammoniacal cochineal, sulphindigotic acid, logwood, the lichen reds, rosaniline, bilberries, cherries, mallows, and the berries of the privet. Most if not all of these matters can be precipitated by chemical treatment, or they may be detected by dialysis. If a cube of gelatine less than an inch square be placed in the wine under experiment, it will be found, after twenty-four or forty-eight hours, stained all through, if artificial colouring matters are present; but if the wine is quite pure, then the natural colouring matter will not have penetrated deeper into the gelatine than one-eighth of an inch. It is worth notice that the natural colour soaks in slowly; the artificial colour quickly.

The *Comptes Rendus* of the Académie des Sciences, Paris, give an account of a patient who, through entire closure of the esophagus or gullet, could get neither food nor liquid into his stomach, and had to undergo the operation of gastrotomy. Through the opening thus made the operator passed different substances and took note of the time they remained in the stomach. Starch, fat, and flesh disappear in from three to four hours; milk is digested in an hour and a half or two hours, and alcohol and water are absorbed in from thirty-five to forty-five minutes. One day a small quantity of pure gastric juice was taken from the

stomach for experiment: it is described as colourless, viscid, yet easily filterable, having little odour, and not putrefying spontaneously. The acidity of the gastric juice varies but slightly whether mixed with food or not, the mean being 1·7 gram of hydrochloric acid to one thousand grams of liquid. 'The quantity of liquid,' we are informed, 'found in the stomach has no influence on its acidity; the latter is almost invariable whether the stomach be nearly empty or very full. Wine and alcohol increase the acidity, while cane-sugar diminishes it. If acid or alkaline liquids are injected into the stomach, the gastric juice reassumes its normal acidity in about one hour. It is more acid during digestion than when digestion is not going on, and the acidity increases towards the end of the process. Since the stomach is generally empty at the end of four hours, and hunger does not supervene till about six hours after a meal, it would seem that hunger does not result solely from emptiness of the stomach.' This last remark is not in accordance with the opinions of other physiologists; but we venture to suggest that in common with the limbs, the stomach needs rest, and finds it in the two hours of quiet above mentioned. We would further remark, that the theory that sugar does not create acid in the stomach is contrary to all ordinary medical teaching, and even of daily experience.

A surgeon in a provincial town in Scotland has achieved a remarkable operation. He cut out from the neck of a patient a diseased portion of the larynx, and inserted an artificial larynx through which the man can speak articulately. This is one of the triumphs of surgery.

We mentioned some time ago that certain practitioners in the United States had succeeded in removing tumours by the application of a current of electricity. Recently the same method has been employed, and with the same success, for the removal of those blemishes from the skin popularly described as 'port-wine stains,' and other excrescences. Care is required in regulating the strength and duration of the current according to the nature of the case; if this be insured, the operation can hardly fail of a successful result. Particulars of cases and their treatment are published in the *New York Medical Journal*.

Pursuing his contributions to meteorology, Professor Loomis of Yale College, Newhaven, U.S., finds that the areas of rainfall in the United States generally assume an oval form, and the oval is not unfrequently a thousand miles long and five hundred broad. He finds too that falls of rain often have great influence in checking the progress of a storm; and that they appear to be subject to some law of duration. For example, some rains last eight hours, some sixteen, some twenty-four; but beyond twenty-four hours the instances are very rare. 'This fact,' he remarks, 'seems to indicate that the causes which produce rain, instead of deriving increased force from the rainfall, rapidly expend themselves and become exhausted. It cannot be explained by supposing that the vapour of the air has all been precipitated, because these cases chiefly occur near the Atlantic coast, where the supply of vapour is inexhaustible. Is there not here an indication that the forces which impart that movement to the air which is requisite to a precipitation of its vapour, become exhausted after a few hours' exercise?' By further

research it is found that during the six months from November to April, violent winds are more than five times as frequent as during the other six months of the year; and that they come from a northern quarter two-and-a-half times more frequently than from a southern quarter. Though Professor Loomis' observations apply to the climate of America, they may be considered with advantage by our own meteorologists.

The President of the Institution of Civil Engineers in his inaugural address took occasion to say as evidence of the advantages which accrue to a country through the labours of the civil engineer, that the sum authorised to be expended on British railways up to the end of 1876 amounted to seven hundred and forty-two millions; a sum pretty nearly as large as our huge national debt. And from this Mr J. F. Bateman argued, that as in engineering special qualifications, and some of a high order, were required, it would be well if advantage were taken of the numerous public schools in which instruction bearing on engineering is given, whereby young men would have at least some qualification on entering the profession. At the same time it would be a mistake to regard that training as other than preparatory and incomplete. It is by actual outdoor work only, that a man can become an engineer; and engineering work is not to be found at school or college.

Mr Bateman—who by the way will long be remembered for his water-supply of Glasgow—instead of travelling over many topics, confined himself to the great and important question of rainfall and water-supply for the whole kingdom, with a view to proper economy. It is a question which becomes more and more important with the increase of population and consequent multiplication of machinery. When the Metropolitan Board of Works are about to ask parliament for leave to undertake the water-supply of London, the proportions of the question may be assumed to be at their largest; and storage of rainfall and of flood-waters, prevention of pollution, and the best way of obtaining absolutely pure water, together with other topics, will have to be treated with serious consideration.

SPRING.

Off let me wander hand in hand with Thought
In woodland paths and lone sequestered shades,
What time the sunny banks and mossy glades
With dewy wreaths of early violets wrought,
Into the air their fragrant incense fling,
To greet the triumph of the youthful Spring.
Lo! where she comes! 'scaped from the icy lair
Of hoary Winter; wanton free and fair!
Now smile the heavens again upon the earth,
Bright hill and bosky dell resound with mirth,
And voices full of laughter and wild glee
Shout through the air, pregnant with harmony,
And wake poor sobbing Echo, who replies
With sleeping voice that softly, slowly dies.

ERRATUM.

[The verses which appeared in last month's issue, entitled *The Well-known Spot*, were signed by mistake ASLEY H. BALDWIN instead of F. G. ELLIOTT. We take this opportunity of rectifying the error.]

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THE GAELIC NUISANCE.

SECOND ARTICLE.

A FEW months ago, in an article entitled 'The Gaelic Nuisance,' we endeavoured to point out the impolicy of fostering Gaelic as the vernacular tongue in the Highlands and Islands. Our observations were variously received. Many approved of the article; by some it was apparently misunderstood. On this latter account, we return to the subject, in the hope of removing such misapprehensions as may happen to exist. This time, at any rate, we shall take care to be perfectly explicit as to our meaning.

In the article referred to, we offered no objection to the use of Gaelic, provided the young were brought up with a knowledge of English. That was distinctly our contention, and we believe that such is the opinion of all who think seriously on this important question. We therefore repeat in terms on which nothing but perversity can put a wrong construction, that the fostering of Gaelic to the exclusion of English—for it practically comes to that—is a grave error; it is a cruelty which merits exposure and reprobation. Why it is a cruelty is very clear. As previously stated, the use of Gaelic as the only known vernacular, keeps large numbers of poor people ignorant, it usually fixes them to their place of birth, and accordingly excludes them from earning their bread in the general competition of the world. It is very easy for enthusiasts living at a respectful distance to write in glowing terms about the antiquity of Gaelic, about the wonderful beauty of Gaelic poetry, about the philological value of Gaelic phraseology, about the satisfaction of being able to speak Gaelic as well as English. These are not the points in dispute. Let people, if they will, and if they can afford the expense, learn to speak and read Gaelic supplementary to English, just as many of us learn to speak and read French or German. The more languages that can be acquired the better. About that there is no contention. What we deem to be a

scandal and a cruelty is the practice of rearing, or allowing to grow up, groups of children with a knowledge of no other language than Gaelic; the consequence being that they are for the most part condemned to life-long poverty and ignorance. And that is what is done through the mistaken policy of it may be well-meaning sentimentalists and philanthropists, who are seemingly unaware of the misery they are helping to perpetuate. The English language, like the laws and constitution of the country, is a common heritage, in which every child has a claim to be instructed, so that all may be qualified to perform such duties as fall to their lot. Is it not, then, shocking to find groups of old and young scattered about the Highlands and Islands who cannot speak a word of English, and who cannot so much as sign their names? We might almost say they have no more knowledge of newspapers, or of English literature generally, than the lower animals, amidst which in dreary solitudes they hopelessly pass their existence.

The Highlanders have scarcely had justice done to them. They possess characteristics of a noble race. Faithful, honest, and steady in civil life. Valorous as soldiers. Peaceful and law-abiding in a very extraordinary degree. Those among them who by some good fortune quit their native glens and mix with the Lowland population, speedily learn English, and are able to converse as fluently in that language as in their native Gaelic. In fact, wherever they are brought in contact with English-speaking neighbours, they manifest no mental deficiency. In many instances they have attained to eminence. Only where they are habitually neglected, and left in untoward circumstances to vegetate in primitive ignorance, do they shew anything like laziness, and an indifference to improvement. From all we happen to know of the Highlanders, they only need to be put in the way of being cultivated by education and contact with the outer world.

In hinting at educational deficiencies we tread on tender ground. There is an Educational Act applicable to the whole of Scotland, whether the mainland or islands. No spot is exempted from

the operation of a school-board. Although the Act was passed in 1872, it appears from one cause or other that there are districts where no schooling is available, and children are suffered to run about wild. In an article in the *Scotsman* newspaper of January 5, 1878, a correspondent writing on the wretched condition of the Highland 'crofters,' or occupants of small patches of land, refers to the educational deficiencies in the parish of Barvas, on the west coast of Lewis. Here is what he says: 'At present, the children know not a syllable of English; the women and thirty per cent. of the men are as ignorant; and twenty per cent. of the people married cannot sign their marriage papers. One thing certain is that the people are themselves totally unprepared for the good that the Act is expected to do them; and that it will be only by means of vigilant compulsory officers that its full operation will be secured. In the meantime the schools in the parish have not been opened; and ragged boys and girls hang about on the moor all day long herding cattle, or idle near the wayside in companies of threes and fours, holding fast by tethers, at the ends of which small melancholy lambs are grazing.' What a picture of primitive rural life! Education practically non-existent. The compulsory provisions of the School Act in a state of abeyance!

The island of St Kilda, to which we called attention, exhibits a small population with no means of learning English, and who for religious instruction in Gaelic are wholly dependent on the Rev. John McKay, a minister appointed by the Free Church. This worthy individual, who is a bachelor of advanced age, and whom, by mistake, we spoke of as being married, can speak and read English; but with the exception of the imported wife of one of the natives, he is the only individual on the island who can do so, and acts as a general interpreter on the occasion of visits from strangers. There is no school in the island, nor is there any attempt to teach English. Is this a condition of things which commends itself to philanthropists?

In a handsomely printed and illustrated work, *St Kilda Past and Present*, by George Seton, Advocate (Blackwood and Sons), 1878, there is an effective reference to the want of education in the island of St Kilda. 'Probably,' says this observant writer, 'the most beneficial influence that could be brought to bear upon the St Kildians would be of an educational kind. Through the instrumentality of the Harris school-board or otherwise, an energetic effort ought to be made to introduce a systematic course of instruction in English, with the view of the inhabitants enjoying the vast benefits which would inevitably ensue. At present, they are not only cut off from regular communication with the mainland, but in consequence of their ignorance of the language of the United Kingdom, they are debarred from the means of enlarging their minds, and subverting their prejudices, by the perusal of English literature. A recent number of *Chambers's Journal*

—to which every English-speaking section of the globe owes such deep obligations—contains an admirable article, from the pen of the veteran senior editor, on the subject of "The Gaelic Nuisance," to which I venture to call the attention of all who are interested in the future welfare of the inhabitants of St Kilda. The writer points to Galloway on the one hand, and to the Orkney and Shetland Islands on the other, as illustrative examples of the blessings which have flowed from the substitution of English for Gaelic and Norse respectively; and in the course of his remarks he makes special allusion to St Kilda.'

Thanking Mr Seton for this acknowledgment of the correctness of our views, we pass on to a note lately received from a sheriff-substitute in a Highland county. He says: 'Allow me to thank you for your article in the last part of *Chambers's* entitled "The Gaelic Nuisance." I have resided here for several years, and am convinced that the civilisation of the Highlands is impossible so long as Gaelic continues to be the language of the common people. I hope your article will open the eyes of common-sense people to the necessity of abolishing Gaelic as a spoken language, by the substitution of English.'

A gentleman connected by heritage with one of the outer Hebrides, sends us a note, in which, after commenting on the grotesque objections that had been made to our article, he observes: 'We all understand now—though a few may deceive themselves and others—that man is not made for language, but language for man. We Highlanders are determined to adopt the current language, just as we have adopted the current coin of the realm.' This is plain speaking; and we hope that the writer, using the power which his position gives him, will in his own locality see that the children are taught to read and understand English; such, in our opinion, whatever others may think, being only a simple act of justice.

In our former article we alluded to the case of Wales, in which large numbers are as unhappily excluded from a knowledge of the English language as are many of the Gaelic-speaking population of the Highlands. We are glad to see that this deficiency is beginning to attract attention, for reasons similar to those we employ. Recently at a large meeting in connection with the Welsh Church in Chester, presided over by the Bishop of Chester, as reported in *The Times*, Jan. 10, the Dean of Bangor, in speaking of Wales, remarked: 'Wales was in a certain extent backward. In the power of influencing those outside their own country, they were behind England, Scotland, and Ireland, simply because their language excluded them from making their thoughts and views known to those of different nationality. . . He ventured to hope that the day was rapidly approaching when every Welshman would be able to use the English language.' Such a public acknowledgment as this is eminently satisfactory. It shows moral courage in combating

popular prejudice. We should like to see Highland proprietors quite as openly avowing that it was time every Gaelic-speaking child 'was able to use the English language.'

The most conclusive evidence that could be advanced respecting the serious disadvantage of maintaining Gaelic as an exclusively common language is that offered by Mr Simon S. Laurie, the accomplished Professor of Education in the University of Edinburgh, who lately delivered an Address on the subject of Education in the Highlands. According to a newspaper report of his address, he said in reference to the Highlanders: 'One thing needful was to secure for them freedom of locomotion; so that when the pressure on one district became too great, the people might move to another. Without a knowledge of the English language, the country of the Highlander was bound round him as with a brazen wall. He need not try to get out of it, because his native language put him at such a disadvantage with other men that he had no chance against them. . . There was no doubt that the teaching of Gaelic should be subordinate to the teaching of English. If they trained a boy in a Highland school to read, write, and speak Gaelic, what were they to do with him? How would we like to be in that position ourselves? Fancy a boy at the age of fifteen or sixteen able only to point out in Gaelic to a stranger the way he should take; would they not find that he had been miseducated—in fact cut off from being a member of the British Empire altogether? At the same time, while he held that, he was of opinion that they could not teach English to the Highlanders well except through the Gaelic. The Highland children learned very quickly—more quickly than the Lowland children—they could soon read with perfect fluency such a book as McCulloch's *Course of Reading*, and yet not understand a single word; shewing that they would not learn English well except through Gaelic. The aim of the whole teaching should be to make the pupils thoroughly acquainted with English.'

With such a concurrence of evidence, and with the knowledge that there is a School Act of six years' standing, why, it will be asked, are children in the Highlands and Islands still left to remain untaught in the elements of education? That is a question that could perhaps best be answered by the Education Board for Scotland. We can only conjecture that the educational deficiency in various quarters is due to the difficulty, for pecuniary reasons, in establishing and maintaining schools on a proper footing consistently with the obligations of the statute. Mr Laurie mentions that the school-rates press with a severity which in some places is perfectly paralysing. 'In Shetland, for example, the School Boards were brought to a stand-still. They could not face a rate of four shillings a pound; the same proprietors having to pay not less than four shillings a pound for poor-rate and other burdens besides.' This agrees with what we have privately heard of Shetland, where the rates of one kind or other very nearly swallow up the whole rental

drawn by proprietors. Mr Laurie states emphatically as to this difficulty of school-rates, that 'unless the government paid what was necessary above fifteen-pence per pound, the Highlands and Islands would not have the full benefit of the Act of 1872.'

Evidently, the School Boards, notwithstanding their comprehensive and compulsory powers, are unable to plant and sustain schools in all quarters where required. The difficulty, it is observed, is financial. Let us instance the island of St Kilda. Its inhabitants are said to be seventy-six in number, while the annual rent exigible by the proprietor is somewhere about a hundred pounds, payable in kind. How can the School Board of Harris, with which the island is connected parochially, be expected to build a school and sustain a schoolmaster for the benefit of so small a population, in which there are perhaps only a very few children of school age? To build a school of the ordinary authorised type would cost at least six hundred pounds. And the payment of a teacher with other expenses would amount to one hundred pounds a year. The organisation of a school on this footing would go far beyond what is desirable or what could be asked for from either the state or the ratepayers.

A consideration of the financial difficulty leads to the conviction that something very much less costly than the present school organisation must, in many parts of the Highlands be attempted, if the children are to get any education at all. Mr Laurie very properly remarks that children 'would not well learn English except through the Gaelic'; meaning by this, we suppose, that the teacher would require through the agency of Gaelic to explain the meaning of English words. That surely would not be difficult to accomplish; nor would it be unreasonable to establish schools on a much more modest footing than those latterly sanctioned by School Boards. The Scotch were long accustomed to see a very humble class of schools in secluded rural districts. Often, these schools consisted of cottages of not more than two apartments, one of which constituted the dwelling of the teacher. These cottage schools were conducted at an exceedingly small expense, yet they answered their purpose. Neither dignified nor imposing, they were useful. They imparted to the few children in their respective neighbourhoods a knowledge of letters. We are inclined to think that a modification of this kind would solve some existing difficulties as concerns the establishing of schools among the sparse population of the Highlands and Islands. In short, it would be well to legalise a minor or sub-class of schools, to be conducted at a small cost, designed to effect a particular purpose, namely, that of communicating a knowledge of the English language to large numbers of poor children who are at present growing up in ignorance of any spoken tongue but their native Gaelic, and who, in many cases, as is seen, have no education whatever.

We hope the nature of our pleading is no longer misunderstood. It is, that all Gaelic-speaking children may in some shape or other be taught to read and understand the language common to the United Kingdom. There may be some statutory obstacles in the way. There should be none in the light of humanity and common-sense. Perhaps we may return to the subject. Considering

that the welfare of successive generations of helpless beings is concerned, the subject is too momentous to be lightly treated, or to be swept aside by casual gusts of delicious opposition.

W. C.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XIII.—FATHER AND SON.

SIR SYKES was a weak man, and there are few readier elements of mischief than that of a weak man in a strong place—meaning thereby a position where there is authority to be abused. Some of the world's worst tyrants have been emphatically weak, mere spiteful capricious children grown to man's estate, and induced respectively with all the powers of the purple, the royal jika, and the triple tiara. But then the mighty system which they, unworthy, swayed, resembled some gigantic engine put into motion by the idle touch of a truant urchin's hand, and crushing all resistance by the resistless force of its swaying levers and grinding wheels.

A Devonshire baronet, in common with baronets elsewhere, does expect to be to a certain extent the petty autocrat of his own fields and hamlets, to find that there are those who court the great man's smile and tremble at his frown, and to hold rule within strictly constitutional limits over the dwellers on his land and the inmates of his house. The melancholy which had become a part of Sir Sykes Denzil's inner nature, and the indolence which had gradually incrustated him, had prevented the lord of Carbery from asserting in practice the prerogatives which he knew to belong to him in theory. Thus he did not really administer patriarchal justice on his estate, as some hale landlords do. His bailiff decided which labourers should be employed, which dismissed, and what wages should be allotted to crow-boys and weeding-girls. The steward arranged as to the barns to be rebuilt, the repairs to be granted or refused, the rent of whose cottage was to be forgiven, or which arrears were to be sternly exacted. Poachers whom the head-keeper did not like, found Sir Sykes's vicarious wrath make the parish too hot to hold them, while luckier predatedors wired hares unpunished.

The part of a *roi fainéant* suited better with Sir Sykes Denzil's languid habits than they did with his tolerably active mind. He was well aware that the lethargy of King Log is always supplemented by the not wholly disinterested activity of King Log's zealous ministers, and had formed frequent resolutions as to taking into his own hands the reins of government and becoming in fact as well as in name the lord of the manor—of six manors indeed, of which Carbery was the chief. These resolutions had never been acted upon; but Sir Sykes had always been able to lay to his soul the flattering unction that it rested with him alone to choose the time for realising them.

The events of the last few weeks had given some rude shocks to the baronet's indolent self-complacency. He had been threatened with consequences of which he, and he alone, could

thoroughly comprehend the direful nature, and he had been forced to a series of compliances, each of which had degraded him in his own eyes. He had borne with the cynic effrontery of the sailor Hold. He had beneath his roof, seated at his table, in constant association with him and his, an unbidden guest. Mr Wilkins he had, through an unlucky chance, encountered, and instantly the fetters of a new vassalage appeared to be fastened on his reluctant limbs. And he owed this fresh humiliation to the misconduct of his own son!

Sir Sykes was very angry as he quitted No. 11 to seek out the chamber in which Jasper lay, so angry that his temper overmastered for the moment both the pleadings of natural affection and the instinct of caution. He laid his hand brusquely on the door of the room which had been pointed out to him as that to which Jasper had been conveyed, and was about to enter, with small regard to the nerves of the invalid within, when he felt a grasp upon his sleeve, and turned to be confronted by the wiry figure, anxious face, and bead-like black eyes of little Dr Aulfus.

'Excuse me. Sir Sykes Denzil, unless I am very much mistaken?' said the doctor, taking off his hat with such an air, that Sir Sykes, irritable as he was, felt compelled to acknowledge the bow. 'Allow me to introduce myself: Dr Aulfus, Benjamin Aulfus, Ph.D., M.D., M.R.C.S. of Heidelberg, Edinburgh, and London respectively. We never chanced, before to-day, Sir Sykes, to come personally into contact, and I regret that the occasion of our first interview should be so sad a one.'

During this speech, the doctor's eyes had taken stock as it were of Sir Sykes's aspect, and had read the signs of anger in his knitted brows and quivering mouth as accurately as a mountain shepherd discerns the portents of the coming storm. Nor was the reason far to seek. Gossip had been busy, of course, with the private affairs of so exalted a family as that which dwelt at Carbery Chase; and Sir Sykes would have been astonished to hear at how many minor tea-tables the surgeon—for, his medical diplomas notwithstanding, Dr Aulfus was consulted nineteen times out of twenty as a general practitioner—had listened while Captain Denzil's debts and his father's displeasure were freely canvassed.

Of the arrival of Mr Wilkins and of the acceptances which the lawyer held, the little man of healing could of course know nothing. But he shrewdly surmised that Jasper had staked all that he could scrape together, and probably more, on the event of the desperate race which he had ridden on that day, and that his pecuniary losses had provoked the indignation of Sir Sykes, already smarting under recent sacrifices.

'You are very good, sir; I shall see my son, and then—'

Sir Sykes had got thus far in his speech, attempting the while to brush past the doctor, when he found himself gently but resolutely repulsed.

'Now, Sir Sykes,' said the little man, interposing his diminutive person between the tall baronet and the door, as some faithful dog might have done, 'pray have patience with me. Captain Denzil is my patient. He has sustained severe injury, the precise extent of which it is impossible yet for science to determine, and I am responsible

for his safety, humanly speaking—the pilot, in fact, with whom it rests to bring him into port. We have just succeeded, by the help of an opiate, in inducing sleep. It will not last long, on account of the smallness of the dose. But it is of the utmost consequence that it should not be broken; and in fact, Sir Sykes, my patient is my patient, and I must protect him even against his own father.

These last words were uttered in consequence of a renewed attempt on the baronet's part to force a passage, and the persuasive tone in which they were spoken contrasted oddly with the firmness of the doctor's attitude.

‘Really, Mr Aulfus,’ said Sir Sykes, half apologetically, half in dudgeon; but the other cut him short with: ‘Excuse me, Sir Sykes. Dr Aulfus, if you please. It is perhaps the weakness of a professional purist, but I do like to be dubbed a doctor; as your noble neighbour and connection, the Earl, no doubt has a preference for the title of “My Lord.” It has cost me dear enough, sir, that handle to my name; kept me, I may safely say, out of a good four hundred a year of practice I might have had, since old women and heads of families are shy of sending for a regular physician; and that’s why such fellows as Laucetter at High Tor, and Druggett the apothecary in Felworth High Street, rattle about the county, feeling pulses and sending out physic, when a man who has more learning in his little finger than— You smile, sir; and indeed I was unduly warm. No selfish love of lucre, believe me, prompted my remarks, but a sincere scorn for the prejudices and gullibility, if the word be not too strong, of our Devonshire Baskinians.’

By this time the doctor had succeeded in getting Sir Sykes into a neighbouring room, the door of which stood invitingly open, and thus securing the sleeper against the chance of being rudely awakened from his slumber. The baronet too had employed a minute or two in reflections which shewed him how uselessly was the part which he had been about to play, while some dim consciousness that it was unfair to visit on Jasper the unwelcome recognition and jocular impertinence of Mr Wilkins, began to creep into his perturbed mind.

‘You forget, Dr Aulfus,’ he said mildly enough, ‘that I have as yet heard no details as to the injuries which my son has sustained. They are not, I apprehend, of a very serious or indeed dangerous character?’

‘Umph! Dislocation of right shoulder, now reduced, but attended with much pain; severe contusion on temple; some bad bruises, and complete prostration of nervous system from the stunning blow and violent concussion of spinal cord,’ dryly rejoined the doctor, summing up the facts as though he had been a judge putting the pith of some case before a jury. ‘These are all the results that I know of.’ And he paused, hesitating, so that Sir Sykes for the first time felt a genuine twinge of alarm.

‘Have you any suspicion, doctor, that there is something worse than this?’ he asked, drawing his breath more quickly.

‘I don’t know. I hope not,’ returned Dr Aulfus thoughtfully. ‘Our knowledge after all is but cramped and bounded. I remember once at sea (I was assistant-surgeon in the navy and

also on board Green’s Indiamen, before I graduated in medicine) seeing a look in the face of a young sailor who had fallen from the mizen shrouds to the deck, very like what I saw, or fancied I saw, in Captain Denzil’s face to-day. But that was a fall, compared with which even the accidents of a steepchase are trifles; added the doctor more cheerfully, and with an evident wish to change the subject.

‘It is a mad sport, taken as a form of excitement,’ said Sir Sykes, his resentment beginning to turn itself towards the institution of steepchasing; ‘worse still, when mere greed actuates the performers, brutal curiosity the spectators.’

‘I quite agree with you, Sir Sykes, quite,’ chimed in the doctor, with a bird-like chirrup of acquiescence. ‘The mob, my dear sir, whether in decent coats or in torn fustian, is animated by much the same spirit which caused the Roman amphitheatre to ring with applause as wild beasts and gladiators, pitted against one another in the arena, stained the sand with—’

Here Captain Proders came in on tiptoe to say that Jasper was awake and sensible; that he had twice asked if his father had not yet arrived; and that he, Proders, had volunteered to make inquiries, and hearing the sound of voices as he passed the half-closed door, had entered. ‘You, Sir Sykes, I have had the pleasure of meeting once before—at Lord Bivalve’s, in Grosvenor Place,’ he said, with a bow. ‘Captain Proders of the Lancers,’ he added, by way of an introduction. The baronet returned the bow stiffly. He had some recollection of Captain Jack’s jolly face beaming across the Bivalve mahogany; but he felt anything but well disposed towards the owner of Norah Creina and the man who had led his son into the present scrape.

‘A friend of my son’s, I am aware,’ said Sir Sykes half bitterly.

‘And I am afraid,’ ‘Save me from my friends,’ is the saying just now uppermost in your mind, Sir Sykes,’ returned Captain Proders. ‘But I do assure you that, hard hit in the pocket as I have been in this precious business, I’d sooner have lost the double of my bets, than have seen that poor fellow knocked about as he has been. I’m no chicken, and sentiment don’t come natural to me, but I give you my word that had the tumble turned out as bad as I feared it would when first I saw it, I should—never have forgiven myself, that’s all.’ Having said which, Jack Proders mentioned to the doctor that he should be found when required in the coffee-room, and with another bow to Sir Sykes, withdrew. The baronet, guided by Dr Aulfus, entered the darkened room where Jasper lay.

‘Is that you, sir?’ I thought you would come,’ said the hurt man from the bed, stretching out his feeble hand, and as Sir Sykes took the thin fingers within his own grasp, his anger, smouldering yet, seemed for the moment to die away, chased by the crowd of early recollections that beset his memory. He could remember Jasper as a lisping child, a quick intelligent boy, unduly indulged and pampered it is true, but bold-faced and free-spoken at an age when many a youngster, far nobler in every quality of heart and head, is sheepish and tongue-tied. In those days father and mother had been proud and fond of the boy, and Jasper’s future prosperity had been no unim-

portant element in Sir Sykes's schemes and day-dreams.

'You do not feel much pain now?' asked the baronet gently.

'In my arm and head I do,' said the patient, stirring uneasily.

The doctor, as he adjusted the pillows, smiled hopefully. 'A very good sign that,' he whispered to Sir Sykes; 'better than I had hoped for, after the draught. I think we may pronounce all immediate cause for anxiety to be over.'

'When can he be moved?' asked Sir Sykes, in the same cautious tone.

'To Carbery? I should say, if he goes on as well as he is doing now, to-morrow,' replied Dr Aulius. 'I will write down some instructions, with which it will be well to comply, for it will be some few days at least before he can resume his former habits of life.'

'What are you two conspiring about?' demanded Jasper, with an invalid's customary peevishness, from the bed. And then Sir Sykes had to resume his seat and to say a few soothing words.

'You'll soon be well, my boy,' he said kindly; 'and sooner back with us at Carbery, under your sisters' good nursing. Dr Aulius here will, I hope, contrive to come over and give us a call every day till you get your strength again.'

Dr Aulius said that he should be delighted to attend his patient at Carbery Chase, and indeed he looked radiant as he said it. A physician is, after all, a man, and probably a parent, and little Dr Aulius had a wife and was the happy donor of six hostages to fortune. He valued the privilege of professional admittance at Carbery very highly, less on account of the emoluments directly derived therefrom, than of the many small people who would augur well of his skill, since beneath a baronet's roof he should prescribe for a baronet's heir.

The brief conversation between Sir Sykes and his son was rendered the less marked because of Jasper's habitual reticence, and of his father's unwillingness to touch on any topic that might prove painful. Thus the lawyer and his bills met with no mention, and the steeplechase would also have been passed over, had not Jasper himself said: 'I told Jack Prodgers I shouldn't go in for cross-country work again, except with the hounds in winter. No fear, sir, of my donning the silk jacket any more, after this sharp lesson of aching bones and empty pockets. Don't be angry, please, though, with poor old Jack. He meant all for the best, he did.'

Sir Sykes replied that he had already had the pleasure of shaking hands with Captain Prodgers, whom he had formerly met, it appeared, in London society. And soon afterwards, in compliance with an almost imperceptible motion of the doctor's head, he withdrew; and Captain Jack was recalled to keep watch, uncomplainingly, beside his friend's couch, while the patient dozed or talked in snatches.

'Smoke away, old man; it rather does me good than not,' Jasper had said, and the captain's cigar was seldom extinguished during his vigil.

'He'll do!' was the little doctor's cheery whisper as he paid his early morning visit to his charge. And soon after noon, Jasper, pale and tottering, and with his bruised arm in a sling, was helped into one of the Carbery carriages and

proped with cushions; and under the tender escort of his two sisters, Lucy and Blanche Denzil, was slowly and heedfully conveyed home to Carbery Chase.

OUR SEA AND SALMON FISHERIES.

In the department of fishing-industries the march of scientific inquiry has already borne good fruit. The influence of the weather, or more properly speaking of the variations of temperature, on the plentifulness or scarcity of our food-fishes, has grown in importance as an element in determining the success or failure of the herring-fishery, for example; and at more than one fishing-station thermometrical observations are daily made by the fishermen, and reported to the meteorological authorities, who in their turn deduce generalisations and laws from the observations thus recorded. Thus the teachings of the formerly despised 'science' are beginning to bear fruit, and to be openly and fully recognised; and in the future, the fisherman, as a result of the generalisations just alluded to, may be able to determine with tolerable accuracy, before setting sail for the fishing-grounds, the chances of a successful or unsuccessful day's labour. Add to this, that, with increased knowledge of the conditions of life, development, and general history of our food-fishes, wise legislation may provide for the protection of these fishes and for the determination of the proper periods for the exercise of the fisher's art, and it will be owned that the gains from a scientific investigation of the fishing-industries are simply incalculable.

For these reasons we have peculiar pleasure in noting the appearance of a small volume, under the title of *Sea Fisheries*, by E. W. H. Holdsworth, and *Salmon Fisheries*, by Archibald Young, Commissioner of Scotch Salmon Fisheries (London: E. Stanford, 1877). The work is produced under the joint authorship of two gentlemen long connected with this important branch of British industry. To Mr E. W. H. Holdsworth has been allotted the task of giving an account of the sea fisheries of Britain; whilst Mr Archibald Young, one of the Commissioners of Scotch Salmon Fisheries, has undertaken the task of giving an account of the interests connected with the capture of the king of fishes. Mr Holdsworth has to do with the salt water, Mr Young chiefly with the fresh.

Within the last sixty or seventy years, the herring fisheries of Scotland, chiefly prosecuted on the north-east coast, have risen to be a most important national industry and source of wealth, the value of the catch in a good year amounting to between two and three millions sterling. Needing no cultivation, the sea yields an annual harvest almost incredible in amount. Of course much capital is embarked; but without the hardihood, the enterprise, and the daring risks encountered by the fishermen, all would be unavailing. It is seen by a late Report, that in the united fisheries of herrings, cod, and ling, in 1876, nearly fifteen thousand boats, decked and undecked, were engaged, the total value of which amounted to upwards of a million sterling. Ever on the outlook for what will advance the interests of the herring fishery, the capitalists engaged in the business have latterly added a fast-sailing steamer

to the fleets of boats; by which means herrings caught at a considerable distance are transferred from the boats to the steamer, rapidly brought into port, and being there properly prepared, are despatched by railway to various parts of the United Kingdom.

Railways, by facilitating transit, have been immensely advantageous to all kinds of fisheries. It might now be said that by this ready means of transit the most inland towns in the country are now as well supplied with fresh fish as towns on the coast; in many cases better. Ice has also played an important part in the transmission of fish to distant places. Salmon being thus preserved till it reaches the market, arrives in the best condition, and is sent to table fresh as when caught. One has only to look at the quantities of beautiful salmon and other fish spread out on marble benches of the fishmongers in any of our larger towns, to see what railways and ice have done for this branch of industry.

Mr Holdsworth expresses strong regret that the prospects of the Irish fisheries are not by any means of a promising kind, as far as the cultivation of the art or industry is concerned. All authorities agree in regarding the coasts of Ireland in most instances as representing fishing-grounds in which stores of wealth lie unheeded and unsecured. This is a state of matters much to be deplored, for the sake of all parties concerned—fishermen, consumers, and the nation at large. Some years ago, when we were in Ireland, we heard it mentioned that much of the fish sold in Dublin was supplied by fishermen from the coast of Wales; and we likewise heard that large quantities of dried white-fish were introduced to Portrush by fishermen from Islay and other western isles of Scotland. Though it is stated that the famine of thirty years ago has had much to do with the depressed state of the Irish fisheries, and that emigration has also affected them, we yet fail to see why, by a little enterprise, the still resident natives should not be able to beat both the Welsh and Scotch out of their own market.

As regards the salmon fisheries, Mr Young leads us into a region which is still in some particulars a field of debate and controversy. There are very few readers, it may be presumed, who are ignorant of the controversies, for instance, which have been carried on concerning the correct answer to the question, 'Are parr the young of salmon?'—a query which Mr Young, along with the great majority of naturalists, answers unhesitatingly in the affirmative. The natural history of the salmon forms the starting-point of all knowledge of the fish, and of the information necessary for determining the conditions under which it may be properly and successfully caught—the terms 'properly' and 'successfully' in this case being taken as including the best interests of the fish and its race, as well as the interests of its human captors. Briefly detailed, the life-history of a salmon may be said to begin with the ascent of the parent-fishes in autumn and early winter to the upper reaches of our rivers for the purpose of depositing their eggs. In each salmon-mother it has been calculated about nine hundred eggs exist for every pound of her weight, and these eggs she deposits in a trench, excavated by aid of the jaw, in the gravelly bed of the stream. Fertilised after being deposited, by the milt of the male parent, the

latter covers the eggs with gravel by means of his fins—the tail-fin being, as far as can be ascertained, the chief agent and means in effecting this necessary action. Such eggs as escape the attack of enemies—and of these, in the shape of aquatic birds and of other fishes, the salmon-ova have more than enough—undergo development, and are hatched in from ninety to one hundred and thirty days.

It would be an interesting study were we to trace the stages through which the young fish becomes evolved from its simple germ, and the wondrous formation of tissues and organs out of the soft jelly-like matter of which the egg is primarily composed. But want of space forbids; and our readers must therefore fancy for themselves the process whereby the hidden artist Nature works through development, and at length shapes out the young salmon, or 'parr.' It may be mentioned in proof of the small proportion borne by the salmon-eggs actually deposited, to those developed, that authorities agree in stating that out of three thousand eggs deposited, scarcely one egg may survive—so terrible is the destruction of young salmon. This fact alone, as Mr Young argues, should tell powerfully as an argument in favour of artificial propagation; since out of three thousand eggs which are thus hatched, at least one thousand young fishes may be successfully reared.

The curious fact is noticed that in most if not all broods of salmon, half of the parrs will become 'smolts'—as they are called in their next stage—at the end of a year or so, whilst the other half will not become smolts until after the lapse of two years and more. This incongruity, if we may so term it, has led to the questions, 'Do the parrs become smolts between thirteen and fifteen months after they have left the egg, or at the age of two years and two months?' Both questions may apparently be answered in the affirmative, since each brood exhibits this peculiar feature of some of its members coming to the smolt-stage long before the others. Mr Young remarks on the authority of a salmon-breeder in the north, that about eight per cent. of the salmon hatched by this gentleman became smolts at the end of the first year; about sixty per cent. at the end of the second year; and about thirty-two per cent. at the end of the third year. These facts would seem to indicate that the end of the second year is the most natural period for the assumption of the smolt-guise, which, as distinguished from that of the parr, exhibits a beautiful coat of silvery mail.

The parr, it may be remarked, dies if placed in sea-water, whereas the smolt thrives in the latter element. On reaching the sea, the young smolt may measure from four to five inches. After a residence in the sea of some six or eight weeks, the smolt returns to its river as a 'grilse,' which varies from five to eight or nine pounds in weight, according to the time it has remained in the sea. After returning to its river the grilse spawns, and then returns to the sea. The features of the mature salmon are now apparent, and the fish increases in size after each such annual migration to the sea. Indeed nothing is more extraordinary in the history of the salmon than its rapid increase and growth after these periodical migrations to salt water. Three salmon which weighed ten, eleven and a half, and twelve and a half pounds as they were migrating seawards, were duly marked;

and on being caught six months afterwards when returning to the fresh water, were found to have increased in weight to the extent of seventeen, eighteen, and nineteen pounds respectively. Although salmon usually return to the rivers in which they first saw the light, yet it has been ascertained that the practice is not an invariable one. There is no good reason why one river should not suit a salmon as well as another, and in their wide migrations these fishes are exceedingly likely to enter rivers other than their native streams.

One of the most interesting topics touched upon by Mr Young in his observations, is that regarding the relative late or early development of salmon in different Scotch rivers. Prefacing, that a 'clean' salmon is a fish that has been for some time in the sea, it has been generally believed that rivers which issue from a lake are 'early' rivers—or in other words that they are streams which clean salmon will ascend in the early spring. But this idea receives little or no support from facts as they stand. Many early Scotch rivers have no lake heads; whilst many Scotch rivers which run out of or through lakes are late rivers. Mr Frank Buckland thinks a river's 'earliness' in the matter of salmon depends on its proportion of mileage in length to its square mileage of 'catchment'—that is of the land-area from which the river is fed. This, however, seems to us a whimsical theory, and might be disproved by facts. As regards the 'earliness' of rivers, Mr Young's theory is that much depends on temperature; in fact, temperature is known to be the chief cause which regulates the distribution of life in the sea, and there is no one fact, so far as we are aware, which can be said to militate against his views. His theory is, however, being tested by the Scottish Meteorological Society at Inverurie; by the Duke of Richmond, on the Spey; by the Duke of Sutherland, on two early and two late rivers in Sutherlandshire; and by the Tweed Commissioners—the method of testing being by thermometers applied to the fresh water of the rivers, and to the sea near their mouths.

The latter part of the volume under notice is occupied with statements relative to salmon fishery laws and legislation, a subject in which the author is naturally deeply interested, and in which our knowledge of the salmon naturally culminates when the fish is regarded from an economic standpoint. In Scotland, it seems we are far behind England and Ireland in respect that there are no Inspectors of salmon fisheries empowered to make annual inspections and reports on the Scotch salmon fisheries! And this fact becomes the more inexplicable, and the more urgently demands remedy, when we consider that the Scotch fisheries are many times as valuable as those of our English neighbours. Then also, Mr Young has a most justifiable grumble at the fact that, in our statutes, there are very inadequate provisions made for the removal of artificial and natural obstructions in salmon rivers, and for the prevention of pollutions; and no close-time for trout or char. The importance of clearing away natural obstructions to the ascent of the salmon in rivers is well exemplified when it is found that in Scotland no less than 478 miles of river and loch are thus closed against these fishes. No less forcibly shown is the vexatious fact that

rivers are polluted and rendered unfitted for breeding-streams by means and methods which the River Pollution Commissioners in their Reports declare to be preventable at a moderate cost, without injury to the manufactures with which they are connected.

Besides pollution, two things are especially detrimental to the Scottish salmon fisheries. The first to be mentioned, is the abominable practice of building weirs across rivers in order to send water into mill-lades, and the ignoring of the law that requires that the water shall be periodically diverted into the river again. Certain proprietors, to make the most of their lands, give perpetual leases of ground to manufacturers of one kind or other, with liberty to build a weir and take water to turn their machinery. There may be provisions in the lease as there is in law to the effect that the withdrawal of water shall cease during the night and on Sundays. Such provisions are, however, in many instances neglected, as giving too much trouble. The result is, that the whole river, or very nearly the whole, except in times of flood, is diverted into the mill-lade, whereby trout and salmon are unable to surmount the weir, and are effectually barred from getting to the upper part of the stream. In plain terms, by the selfishness of a proprietor (or a pair of them, one on each side), all who dwell on the river above the weir are deprived of the fish which nature had bountifully assigned to them. Already in these pages we have alluded to a scandalous case of this kind on the Tweed.

The second of the two things which act detrimentally on the Scottish salmon fisheries is the circumstance that certain landed proprietors near the mouths of some rivers possess a right to establish nets for the purpose of catching all the salmon that attempt to go up the stream. We do not contest the legality of their arrangements. We only speak of the cruel way it acts on the rights of all who live in the upper parts of the river, and on whose waters the salmon have bred. While the lower proprietors catch the great bulk of the fish, those higher up get but a miserable remnant. During the whole of the time that the nets are on, the lower proprietors have a practical monopoly of the fishings. Is that at all reasonable? As a consequence, first of the weirs, and second of the netting system of the lower proprietors, there is evoked throughout the upper part of rivers in Scotland, a gloomy and almost vengeful hatred of the existing salmon-fishing system. Of course the higher and middle classes take no part in demonstrating their sense of the injustice that is committed. The lower classes, less scrupulous, and indignant at the rapacity of the weir-owners and lower proprietors, take such salmon as they can get hold of in spawning-time, thus destroying by myriads in embryo what should have been a vast national advantage. Detesting as we do all sorts of poaching and irregularities, we are glad that the Commissioners appointed to investigate the condition of the Scottish salmon fisheries, have laid stress upon the miserable imperfections to which we have ventured to draw attention.

Mr Young informs us that in 1874, as many as 32,180 boxes of Scotch salmon were sent to the London market alone, the estimated value of which might possibly be £321,800. It seems to us, however, a hard case that the great bulk of such valu-

able property should be secured by proprietors at or near the mouths of the several rivers, to the exclusion of those in the upper reaches of the streams, who ought to have an equal right to participate in the annual fish-harvest. Free-trade in salmon-fishing, so much as lies within the limits of strict justice, is still in expectation. We commend the subject to the further consideration of Frank Buckland, Mr Young, and brother-anglers.

RACHEL LINDSAY.

A SOUTH-AUSTRALIAN STORY.

TOWARDS the end of November, about two years ago, I received the following curt note from my brother Donald, who like myself is a sheep-farmer in South Australia. 'MY DEAR JERRY, Lizzie sends her love, and hopes to see you when your shearing is over, as usual. If you'll say what day, I'll fetch you from Ballarat.—Yours affectionately,

DON GARDINER.'

'N.B.—Just begun to wash the wool. Lizzie's sister says she has seen my apparatus at Conolly's, but I don't think it. Ask Conolly.'

Conolly was a neighbour of mine, and he chanced to have brought me Don's letter, and to be lighting his pipe at my elbow while I read it. 'Conolly,' said I, 'do you know any of Mrs Gardiner's sisters? She has an unlimited number, I believe, for I have met a fresh one—sometimes two fresh ones—every Christmas for about half-a-dozen years, and here is still another I never heard of. She appears to be acquainted with you and this neighbourhood.'—

'O yes; that's Cinderella,' interrupted Conolly, as he abstracted a bundle of newspapers from our joint post-bag and began to rip the wrapping from them. 'Haven't you seen Cinderella? She was never out of Tasmania, I suppose, until last spring, when she was staying up here with the Macdonalds. The Macdonald girls called her Cinderella because she had always been the one to stay at home and keep house while the others went about. Her proper name is Rachel. O Jerry, Jerry!' he broke out suddenly, laughing in what seemed to me a very offensive manner (my proper name I may mention being Gerald), 'your sister-in-law Lizzie will be too many for you. She won't let you escape this time. She has kept Rachel as her last card.'

'If ever I marry a woman with such a name as that, I hope I shall be a henpecked husband for the rest of my life!' I retorted angrily, seizing a paper-knife and beginning to tear away at the *Australasian*, so as to drown further conversation upon what was a very sore subject.

My brother Donald's wife Lizzie was as good and kind a little woman as ever breathed, but like many young wives in happy circumstances, she was a matchmaker. And being impulsive, effusive, and not quite—what shall I call it? I don't like to say she was not quite a lady, but that would suggest my meaning—she did not pursue her calling with that tact and judgment which its delicate nature required. I need not say more, except that she had a number of spinster sisters,

and one only bachelor relative, who lived all by himself in single-blessedness on his own fine and thriving property, and that I was that male victim. I beg pardon of all the Misses Lindsay for using such a term; I was not a victim as far as *they* were concerned. But I did feel it hard that I should be laughed at wherever I went as the captive knight of half-a-dozen fair ones, when I had never had the choosing of one of them.

When I received the above letter I had just seen my last wool-bale packed on the last bullock-dray and started on its slow journey to Melbourne; and the day after I set off myself on my yearly visit to Don. He was less fortunate in respect of sheep-shearing than I, for living in an exceptionally cool district, where an exceptionally wet and wintry spring had kept everything behindhand, he had still all his troubles to come. I thought of that as I buttoned myself into my Ulster, which I was glad of that cold morning, though Christmas was only a month off; and I reflected that I should be the only unemployed man at the disposal of the household until the shearing was over, and foresaw (as I thought) the consequences. I made up my mind, however, that I would defy Lizzie's machinations in a more systematic manner than heretofore. May I be forgiven for so priggish a determination.

It was midnight before I reached Ballarat, where Don usually met me; but upon this occasion I found a telegram stating that he was too busy to leave his farm, and would send for me next day. So I had one game of pool at the club and went to bed; and next morning enjoyed an hour or two over newly arrived English papers and periodicals, and a solitary lunch; and then the familiar old ramshackle buggy and the beautiful horses Don was famed for made their appearance, and I set off on the last stage of my journey. When I arrived at my destination it was dark and raining heavily; and the groom who opened the stable-gate told me that my brother had not long come up from the wash-place and was interviewing shearers at the hut. I was wet and muddy, so I went straight to my room without even asking for my sister-in-law, who was usually in her nursery at that hour, and proceeded to make myself respectable for dinner. Presently I heard Don about the passages (the house was 'weather-board' and the partitions extremely thin) asking the servants where I was; and then his head and a half-bared neck appeared in the narrow aperture between my door and the door-post.

'Glad to see you, old boy; but I'm too dirty to come in,' said he. 'Seen Lizzie?'

'Not yet.'

'Seen Rachel?'

'Not yet. But I say, old man, would you mind telling me how many *more* sisters you've got?'

'No more,' said Don with a grin. 'She's the last one, and she's the best of them all.'

'Then I hope I may be allowed for once to enjoy the society of one of Lizzie's sisters, in a friendly way,' I grumblingly responded (for I may as well admit that Don and I had had confidences of old on this subject). 'Don't you think you could give Lizzie a notion that I don't mean to get married, or that I've a sweetheart up the country, or something of that sort?'

'Not I,' rejoined my brother, laughing. 'I'm not going to spoil her fun, poor little soul; you're

old enough to take care of yourself.' And with that he went off, whistling cheerfully, to his dressing-room.

When I had completed my toilet, I gathered up some boxes of choice cigars that I had been purchasing in town, and carried them to the door of the adjoining apartment, which had been Don's smoking-room ever since I had known it. To my surprise, the bolt shot sharply as I touched the handle, and I heard a rustle of drapery inside. A housemaid coming along with lamps for the dinner-table called out hastily: 'O sir, that is Miss Rachel's room now. The smoking-room is at the end of the verandah, where Miss Carry slept last year. Mrs Gardiner wished it to be changed because she didn't like the smell of tobacco so near the bedrooms.'

I took back my boxes, thinking no more about it, and went on to the drawing-room, which was full of light and warmth and comfort, as usual, and where I found two of my little nieces sitting demurely on a sofa in their best frocks, ready to rush into my arms. Lizzie came hurrying in after me, rosy and radiant, and with plenty of flounces and colours about her, and gave me her own enthusiastic welcome; and then Don, spruce and perfumed, joined us. Don in his early years had been a dandy, and a little youthful weakness remained in him still. He never came to dinner without rings on his fingers and subtle odours in his clothes; and he was at great pains to keep a pair of Dundreary whiskers accurately adjusted on each side of a closely shaven chin. He had been ten years in the Bush, and had never objected to 'roughing it' in a general way; but he persisted in shaving himself every morning, let what would, happen; which singular habit in an Australian country gentleman very much puzzled his bearded friends. I for one, used to quiz him as well as I knew how, when I saw him swathe his neck in a handkerchief, before going out to his work, if the sun shone too strongly; but I respect his little vanities nowadays, and hope he will keep his white throat and his Dundreary whiskers as long as he lives, bless him. He took one of his little girls on his knee, and questioned me about my station matters and about Conolly's sheep-wash (which was *not* so well furnished with improvements as his own, much to his satisfaction); and Lizzie gave me an account of the development of her respective children since I had seen them last, including the cutting of the baby's teeth; and then the dinner-bell rang.

'Where's Rachel?' inquired Don.

I turned a languid eye upon the door when we heard the sound of a distant rustle, expecting to see one of the smart and smiling damsels I was so used to, and wondering whether this one would be dark or fair. With a slow and quiet step she came along the hall and entered the room, and my heart began suddenly to beat in a very unpleasant manner. She had a delicate, thoughtful but piquant face, wavy brown hair modestly and becomingly set, and a slight figure daintily dressed in pale blue silk, with a little white lace about throat and arms; and yet she was the image of Marie Antoinette in Delaroche's picture, only with a more majestic dignity of carriage, if that could be, and a more cold and calm disdain upon her face. As soon as I saw her, and felt the exceedingly faint acknowledgment she vouchsafed

when we were formally introduced, I intuitively guessed—with a horrible sense of shame and mortification—that she had overheard what I said to Don in my bedroom through those card-paper walls!

I never thought I should feel so concerned at standing ill with one of Lizzie's sisters as I felt before that evening came to an end. All through dinner I saw, without looking, offended dignity in the poise of her head and the studied repose of her manner, and heard the ring of it in every inflection of her voice, though it was so subtle and delicate that only a guilty conscience could detect it. It was a great deal worse in the evening, when Lizzie began her fussy little contrivances for throwing us together. The poor little woman never had so impracticable and aggravating a sister to manage; and I never met one who attempted to treat me with such open indifference and thinly-veiled contempt. It is unnecessary for me to state the consequences. I began to interest myself in this Miss Lindsay as I had never interested myself in the others. I began to hanker for her good opinion, as I had never hankered for theirs. I longed to set myself straight with her, and beg her forgiveness for a thoughtless insult that I would have given worlds to recall, and to feel that the way was open between us to meet and associate as friends. This longing grew apace as the evening wore on, but the prospect of its gratification grew less and less. Until the little ones were taken away by their nurse she devoted herself to them, telling them stories most of the time in a dark corner, whence merry chatter and ripples of subdued laughter came flowing out to us; but when they were gone, the bright vivacity that was her true characteristic went too, and she became Marie Antoinette again.

With an amiable wish to make things pleasant, Lizzie asked her to pour out the tea; but she merely stood in front of me at the tea-table, with her little nose in the air, and asked me whether I took sugar and cream, in a high clear tone that brought a puzzled wonder into her sister's face and a slow smile to Don's. I came and stood beside her, to take the cups from her hand (her pretty head was about level with the flower in my button-hole), and she tried to ignore me, but could not. Her hands shook slightly and a little angry flush came and went in her face; but I preferred that to having no notice at all. Later on she went to the piano, and sung song after song for the delectation of Lizzie and Don, neither of whom had the hearing ear and the understanding heart to appreciate the pure quality and poetic sweetness of her voice. By this time I was very low-spirited, and I drew away from my host, who was growing sleepy after his hard day's work, and took a chair near her—which of course was a signal to Lizzie to leave the room. As she sung on, forgetful of me and of everything but the poetry awaking in her, and as I studied the pose of her slight figure and half-bent head, and the now dreamy happiness in her face, and listened for the first time after many years to the true translation of a language that I loved, a vague perception dawned in me that there was some latent fellowship between us. And then I felt that Fate had indeed been hard.

The silence of the room was presently brought into strong relief by a deep snore from Don,

whereupon she suddenly rose from the piano and saw that we were virtually alone. 'Good-night, Mr Gardiner,' she said promptly, holding out a somewhat reluctant hand and stiffening back into her unnatural stateliness.

I took it and held it and looked into her face; and I tried to tell her, as well as plain 'good-night' would do it, that I knew what had happened and wanted her to forgive me. I think she guessed what my look meant, by the sudden crimson flame in her face; but she walked out of the room with as much dignity as she had first walked into it, without another word.

The early days of December were cold and wet, and the shearing was a protracted and troublesome affair. Don hovered about restlessly, whether in or out of the house, always bothered and anxious, and paying frequent visits to the barometer. The ladies clung to their fleeces as if they had been in England; and I tied myself to Lizzie's apron-string with an object alacrity that puzzled and charmed her. My opportunities for 'improving the occasion' were many, but somehow I could never turn them to account. The pride of that little maiden was quite beyond my management. Lizzie threw us together; she left us alone; she did all that in her lay to further my desires for a reconciliation and an understanding; but the implacable resentment of the last of the Lindsays towards me for that wretched slip of the tongue was a stone wall I could not climb over. The worst of it was, she did and said nothing especially offensive; and I was precluded by all sorts of considerations from mentioning the subject we were both (and that we both knew we were) thinking of. So matters went on day after day. And before a great many days were past I was over head and ears in love—I may as well say it and have done with it—and began to feel desperate and dangerous. She walked about the house with her grand air, my Queen Marie Antoinette, my little tyrant that I could almost have demolished with a finger and thumb; and I, standing six feet three in my stockings, had to acknowledge that she was invincible as well as unmerciful. Unregenerate savage as I was, I had faint longings now and then to take her by those slender shoulders, and shake her.

There were times when she became her sweet self, and could not help it though she tried; and these times were born of music. She and I both loved music with that special love that nature permits to a few people; but to no one else in the house did the 'heaven-born maid' present attractions. Don, hard at work all day, could go to sleep after dinner in his arm-chair; and Lizzie, after her manner, could go out of the room in the middle of the most charming song. Then, when we were singing together, or when she was gentle and gracious with the spirit of melody in her, then was the oil thrown upon my troubled waters. At times such as these it flashed across me that she was aware of it.

At length on one of these occasions I made a dash at her guarded citadel; I will not say in what words, but with the blundering foolishness that I suppose characterises all implied aspirations; albeit with sufficient plainness to leave no chance of being misunderstood; and then I had indeed to bite the dust for once in my life. She had been singing *Lull* with the most touching pathos and

abandonment—'Where thou goest I will go, and there will I be buried'—and I could not stand it. Don was in the room, but snoring in that comfortable undertone which denoted a sound and quiet slumber. She stood with her back to the piano, and the sheet of music trembling and rustling in her hands, watching his nodding head in the distance, and turning her delicate profile to my view.

'No; I will not,' she half whispered with haughty rapidity. 'You should have known I would not. I do not particularly want to marry anybody,' she added, flashing round upon me with her crimson face; 'but I will never marry you. I made up my mind to that long ago.'

Everybody knows how, in the supremely solemn moments of one's life, one is apt to be assailed with most incongruously ludicrous ideas. In spite of my bitter mortification at her reply, an absurd rhyme that I had heard somewhere, flashed into my head:

Do not be like Nancy Baxter,
Who refused a man before he'd axed her.

I believe she saw the ghost of a smile that might have hovered round my eyes when I begged to know why she had made up her mind never to marry me; and that made her savage.

'Because you think I came here to be made love to,' she retorted, with all the concentrated contempt that her sweet face and voice could hold. 'You think Lizzie and I have been plotting to catch you—you think we wanted to inveigle you into marrying me! I know what you are going to say'—as I rose and seized her hands, to stop her—'but it is not the truth. I heard you'—lifting her angry eyes, now wet with unshed tears, to mine—'I heard you, with my own ears, tell Don to warn Lizzie beforehand that you did not want to be married.'

'I know you did,' I replied, tightening my hold of her hands, while she made feeble efforts to get away; 'and I wish my tongue had been cut out before I could have insulted you and her like that. Forgive me, Rachel; I have been punished enough.'

'I cannot,' she answered, still panting with her excitement. 'I should be ashamed of myself if I could take a man who had even *thought* of me like that.'

Two tears began to trickle from her eyes, and a little hysterical catch in her breath betrayed to me that her defiant courage was failing her. I would not let her go. Love and shame and a resentful disappointment made me a little savage too.

'I never *did* think of you like that,' I said sternly; 'and you know it. I must hold you till I clear myself—I cannot bear it.'

A log tumbled in the grate, and Don woke up. She caught away her hands and sped out of the room; and I walked through a French window into the cool summer night, too full of wrath and love to speak to anybody.

This was how we stood when at last (on Saturday, the 18th of December) the true Christmas weather came, and we found ourselves in the hot afternoon alone on the croquet-lawn—alone for the first time since my stormy wooing was interrupted. Don being still busy in the sheep-yards and shearing-shed, I had been playing singly against Lizzie and her; and now Lizzie had been called

away to the nursery to consult with a needle-woman who was at work there. We were both anxious (though for very different reasons) to leave off playing when our chaperon had departed; but it was not easy to do so in the middle of a game, especially as she had instructed her partner to play for both of them until she returned. So we knocked the balls about for a few minutes in embarrassed silence, and then had an altercation as to which hoop Lizzie had been through; and then we both got a little huffy, and played, first with indifference, and then with a malicious energy, which resulted at last in my sending her partner's ball into the thickest Portugal laurels in the shrubbery.

'Oh, I beg your pardon!' I exclaimed with compunction, as she solemnly marched off to look for it. 'Let me find it for you.'

'Do not trouble yourself,' she replied sharply; and immediately dashed in between the laurel and a very prickly rose-bush, whose long sprays caught her muslin dress and tore it. I saw her straw-hat amongst the big dark branches, and her little hand searching under them for a moment or two; then she started up suddenly with a quick cry, and bounded into the path again.

'What is the matter? Have you hurt yourself?' I asked anxiously.

Her hat fell to the ground, and she stood before me with the blazing sun on her pretty head, and a wide-eyed horror in her face. 'Wait a minute for me!' she panted breathlessly; 'I want you to help me—I have been bitten.' Before I could collect my senses to understand what she meant, she had sped like a flash of light into the house; and dashing into the laurel bush, I saw what had happened. A big black snake was gliding away from the spot where she had been kneeling.

What was to be done? I stood still for a moment paralysed; then I sent up a hurried prayer for help, and simultaneously 'cooeyed' three or four times with all the force of a powerful pair of lungs, for Don at the wool-shed. Then I hurried after her, and met her coming through the door of my brother's dressing-room with one of his razors in her hand. Her face was white and set as she seized my hand and hurried me into the smoking-room, which was near us, and turned the key in the lock. I knew what she wanted; and I set my teeth in an agony that no words could express, and which I can never think of now without a shudder.

'Look!' she said piteously, with a little sob in her throat; and I looked, and saw one of the fingers of her left hand tied round tightly with a piece of string below the first joint, and the end of it already livid and swollen and shewing the unmistakable punctures of the snake's fangs. She laid her other hand on my arm, and looked up at me with a beseeching face that nearly unmanned me.

'Help me!' she whispered eagerly; 'now—now; before the others come!' And she held out the razor, open and shining. 'It is no use to suck it—it only wastes time; as I seized her finger and put it in my mouth. "Don't, don't! I want to be on the safe side. I don't want to die! O pray, pray help me!"—now sobbing passionately—or else I must try to do it myself. I won't cry out; I won't mind it. I will turn my head away.'

She laid her finger on the edge of the table, and I took the razor from her, and with all the courage I could muster, excised the wounded part. She bore the cruel operation without a murmur.

An hour afterwards the commotion in the house was over, but the shadow of death was on it. Rachel was in her bed, white and faint and breathing heavily, twitching with weak fingers at the bedclothes, and staring with dull eyes into the sad faces around her. I knelt in my room close by with my head on my outspread arms, weeping like a child as if my heart would break, and listening to the creaking of the doctor's boots and the whisking of skirts and whispering of awed voices on the other side of the thin wall. There was nothing else that I was privileged to do, now that I had done that dreadful thing which they told me might be the saving of her precious life.

As the twilight fell, the voices in the sick-room took a louder and more cheerful tone; and presently one of them called softly: 'Jerry, I want you.' Lizzie met me in the passage with a tremulous tear-stained smiling face. 'The doctor says she will be all right now, and that she has to thank you for it,' she whispered. 'Don't stay here any longer; go and have a cigar with Don.'

I seized her hand and kissed it, and looked at her with my wet eyes full of foolish emotion, too glad for speech; and the brightening intelligence of her countenance was curious to note. 'I thought you didn't care for each other,' she said archly; 'but,' she added drily, 'I suppose I was mistaken.'

'Don't suppose anything, Lizzie, there's a good girl. But let me know when I may see her,' I replied earnestly.

'All right—I understand—I'll let you know,' she said, nodding her head vigorously with an air of mystery and importance; and then I went, not to have a cigar with Don, but to walk about the dark garden alleys, alone with my thoughts.

Our patient improved steadily all night, so much so that the family assembled at breakfast as usual. Then a great hunt was made for the snake (at Lizzie's instigation, on the children's behalf), which lasted a long while and was wholly unsuccessful. Then church-time came, and the buggy was ordered to take the servants and the little girls to church; and the hot day wore on. Towards evening, as I was loafing about the garden, Lizzie came running across the croquet lawn—where the balls and mallets were still lying about as we had left them, though it was Sunday—and told me that Rachel was up and dressed, and that she chanced to be alone in the drawing-room.

I stole in to her in the twilight with my heart beating fast; and for a few moments she did not notice me. She was standing by the open piano, small and white and weak, with a shawl wrapped round her, gazing at the silent key-board, with tears running down her face. No one could look less like Delaroché's Marie Antoinette than she looked then.

I took three long steps and reached her side; she gave a great start and turned round to meet me. 'I shall not again be able to play to you for a long while!' she said, looking up at me for sympathy in this new trouble with her soft wet eyes.

When she said that—instead of making me the little speech I had expected, thanking me for

saving her life—I put out my arms. And though we said no word, we forgave one another.

And how pleased Lizzie was when she saw the last of the Lindsays transferred to my unworthy self.

IRRIGATION IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The irrigation of lands by water-channels connected with rivers is accepted as an important means of agricultural development in countries subject to protracted droughts, where rain falls only at distant and uncertain intervals. The irrigation caused by the periodic overflow of the Nile is a noted case in point. But for the annual overflow, temporarily deluging the land for a foot or two, Lower Egypt would be barren instead of a scene of fertility. In a country like England, where there is, generally speaking, too much moisture, the chief consideration is to dry the land sufficiently by draining, instead of flooding it with water; the lesson being thus taught that as regards the culture of soils every country must act according to circumstances. In India, also in Ceylon, there are some remarkable instances of the value of irrigation, and in these countries much more of the same kind requires to be done to avert the horrors of lengthened drought and famine. On this subject, we propose to say a few words regarding large tracts in Southern Africa, which are very much in the condition of those parts of Egypt fertilised by the waters of the Nile.

We speak first of the river Oliphant, which falls into the sea on the west of Cape Colony, and which has various important affluents. The land through which these streams flow is of a most desolate character—broad belts of sand, interspersed with low scrubby bush, swelling into moderate hills, with rugged mountains for a background. Upon the country in the lower part of the Oliphant River rains have no appreciable effect; but when the soil is thoroughly soaked by the overflow of the streams, after the periodical inundations, and then covered by the deposit brought down by the floods from the upper districts, its fertility is wonderful. The average yield is more than a hundredfold. The quantity of land of this character along the Lower Oliphant alone was estimated by the government surveyor in 1859 as eight thousand seven hundred acres.

Thus, like Egypt with its Nile inundations, those districts of Cape Colony—otherwise almost barren—are annually fertilised. But unlike Egypt, the country is unprovided with any means for utilising to the full extent the advantages thus conferred. No appliances are prepared for the purpose of storing the water thus brought down; no artificial channels are cut for directing it and spreading it over a large area; and when the short rainy season has passed, the inhabitants are content to sit down and wait for the next 'periodical.'

A characteristic story is told by a colonist who visited the locality some years ago: 'I strolled along the banks of the river, and was much struck with the extremely fertile appearance of the soil, and the very little which had been done for turn-

ing it to account. It seemed as if the Creator had done everything for the country, and man nothing. Scarcely any rain had fallen for some time past, and the river had not overflowed its banks for more than a year. The stocks of grain and vegetables were getting very low. The farmer was complaining much about the long protracted drought; and when he had finished, I took the liberty of pointing out how he could, by leading out the stream for the purposes of irrigation, or by fixing a pump to be propelled by wind, on the river's bank, secure an abundant supply independent of the weather. He seemed to listen with some interest to the development of my plans; and I began to hope that he had decided upon doing something to relieve himself of the difficulty; but eventually, after turning round and scrutinising the whole horizon in the direction of the river's source, as if in search of some favourable symptom, he yawned heavily, and merely observed in Dutch: "Oh, it will rain some day!"

Of the Zout or Holle River, the most northerly of the tributaries of the Oliphant, Mr P. Fletcher, the government surveyor, says: 'By its arteries it brings together the rich karroo soil of the Hantam and Hardeveld and the rich sandy soil of Bushmanland. The best crop of oats I have seen in Africa was in the deposit of this "periodical." Other portions are of a very saline character. At a rough guess, I believe that in many spots a dam might be constructed three or four feet high, and a couple of hundred feet long, which would flood several hundred acres, thereby rendering them richly arable. I have measured some of last year's "slick" two feet deep; this, of course, was under the most favourable circumstances; but by the use of dams, the deposit might be regulated, the fresh slick might be allowed to deposit to its full extent, so that in a few years the lands would be out of the reach of ordinary floods, if desirable that they should be so. By this system of irrigation, even the most saline basin would become available to agriculture, and about nine or ten thousand acres on the banks of this one periodical river might be brought under cultivation, which would even excel the richest soil in the "Boland" (upper country).

Several tributaries to the Zout River have extensive karroo deposits; some of their basins reaching to nearly one mile in breadth, and their fall being so little, that, standing in their delta, a person cannot sometimes judge with the eye which direction water would flow. Their water-course, which winds through the middle of the deposit, is always well defined, and shews a longitudinal section of the plain. Except in ordinary heavy rains, these channels carry off all the water without overflowing, while a few pounds would leave them in a condition to produce fifty, eighty, or even one hundred-fold. Such is the nature of several tributaries of the Hartbeeste River. I have not seen the latter, but have been more than once informed that it has in some places a deposit of five miles in breadth, that when it does overflow, there is abundance of grass for all the cattle that visit that quarter. If this description of the Hartbeeste River be correct, the products it may be able to yield either in the form of grain or pasture for cattle would appear to most people fabulous. We have here, and not here only, but over an extensive portion of the whole colony,

the richest soil in the world lying at present for two-thirds of the year utterly unoccupied, waste and worthless.'

The Hartbeeste is the last principal tributary, from the south, of the Orange River, and rises in the same chain of hills as the Tanqua, one of the tributaries of the Oliphant—namely, the Roggeveld Berg, receiving affluent streams from the south-east and south-west, draining in fact nearly the whole of the central northern part of the colony. This district is at present almost neglected. The chain of hills in fact, which runs from east to west across the centre of the colony, cuts off the northern half from the mass of the colonists, notwithstanding the fact that here is the most fertile land in South Africa.

The Zak, as the upper part of the Hartbeeste is called, is another instance of the wonderful effects upon the soil of periodical inundations. The following particulars are given in Mr Noble's book on *Cape Colony*. In the dry season these streams are comparatively small, and often a mere succession of pools; but after rains they run briskly, and where level with the banks, overflow and soak the adjacent flats. In many places so very even is the country that they may be said to have no defined channel, and form extensive sheets of water a few inches deep. The Zak River at two hundred and fifty miles from its source thus varies in breadth from one to four miles; and further on from Onderster Doorns to Leenwenkop it widens as much as ten miles. Along its course is the most valuable part of Great Bushmanland. Water can be obtained in its bed even when dry, and its valley generally affords pasture to cattle during both the winter and summer months. After floods, there are extensive alluvial bottoms on each side of it, where agricultural products of every kind might be raised. These are now commonly used by the squatters as sowing lands, without any labour or trouble beyond scratching in the seed. One overflowing of the soil is sufficient to insure a crop even although no rain should fall afterwards. The returns are something marvellous, especially those of wheat.

In 1859 the number of Europeans settled on the irrigable portion of the Oliphant was estimated at one hundred and twenty souls. When there was an overflow of the river, they were active enough; day and night they worked incessantly; the sun and the moon alike witnessed that they did not eat the bread of idleness. But talk to them of improvements in the way of artificial irrigation by dams or pumps, and they ridiculed the idea. Such was the description given at that time; and such, with very little alteration, is an accurate statement of affairs now. The population of Calvinia and Clanwilliam, the two districts drained by the Oliphant River, was in 1875, 15,856, of whom only 2046 were classed as 'urban.' These figures of course include the natives as well as the settlers; but they represent an enormous advance in population since 1859. It is probable that if measures were taken to secure the permanence of the advantages which are now only temporarily enjoyed, the population and wealth of the districts would rapidly increase.

Of the fertility of the soil without any attempt at cultivation, there are abundant evidences. A sandy plain apparently as barren as the Sahara itself is suddenly transformed into an expanse of

waving grass for hundreds of miles, so soon as the annual rains occur. This 'twaa-grass' or Bushman grass is an excellent fodder for horses and cattle, which thrive and grow fat upon it in a few weeks: even when dried up in the winter it is better feeding than any available green pasture. The natives scratch in their seeds and leave them to ripen, which they do without the least attention, and whether the country is visited by drought after the summer rains or not.

The principal drawback to the complete cultivation of the lands is the absence of roads or water-carriage. The Orange River, though a magnificent stream, and navigable in certain parts of its course, is blocked by narrow gorges, shallows, falls, and other impediments, and is useless as a water-way. In time probably, it may be made available, by means of inter-communicating canals to enable the rapids, &c. to be passed; but at present the community must look to the extension of roads and railways for the means of fully utilising the produce which would be raised if a ready market could be found. In this respect a decided step has already been taken. A railway of ninety miles in length has been constructed from Port Nolloth on the north-west coast, in Namaqualand, to the upper mining districts, its terminus being at Ookiep. On the most difficult portion of the route the cost has been very little more than a thousand pounds a mile for this distance; and it might be extended further eastward at a still less cost, to the great advantage of the country drained by the Hartbeeste. Another railway, or a good system of roadways, is wanted to open up the Oliphant water-shed; and with these means of carrying away the produce—all that is necessary—the immense natural resources of the district would be fully developed. In the Fraserburgh district, where the Upper Zak river rises, substantial houses, springs, wells, and dams have already been constructed, and plantations and gardens are being extended; but then from Fraserburgh excellent roads run east and west; and the railway to Cape Town comes as far as Beaufort, situated sixty or seventy miles south-east.

Finally, in Great Bushmanland, diamonds have been found; but there are far greater and more permanent sources of wealth than diamond-fields. Sheep and oxen can be raised, and their wool and hides turned to profitable account. Wheat, grapes, and vegetables of all kinds will grow in abundance. In fact, for pastoral and agricultural qualities the country is unsurpassed. Here then is a field for the enterprising emigrant from our own country. Capital alone is wanting for its development; and capital however small, judiciously expended, must be at once remunerative. We are glad to be able to add that an Act has been passed by the Cape Parliament for granting facilities to landowners for obtaining by loan or otherwise the means of improving their lands by irrigation or other similar permanent works.

Other districts prove how the colonists have succeeded in turning what was, more really than Great Bushmanland or the Lower Oliphant can be said to be, a 'howling desert' into valuable farms, by opening up springs, making dams, forming irrigation channels, and planting trees where no trees existed, and where water was only an occasional and very ephemeral visitor. There is no reason indeed why the 'Nile lands of South

Africa' should not rival in productiveness the great 'world's wonder' in the north of the continent; after which, from natural circumstances, they have been not inapily named.

ALBATROSS NOTES.

FAR out in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, often two thousand miles and more from the nearest land, sails the albatross in its graceful and powerful flight; now following in the wake of the ship, to catch any chance morsel that may have fallen from the cook's waste-basket; now skimming along the water, and occasionally snapping up some small ocean-waif from the crest of a wave; or with a few vigorous strokes of its broad wings, gliding easily round and round the vessel, though she may be going at the rate of a dozen knots an hour.

No passenger to southern lands can have failed to note the extraordinary powers of flight of this magnificent bird, and the wonderful ease with which it sweeps for some minutes together through the air on expanded motionless pinions, rising and falling slightly, and taking advantage of the gravity of its own body and the angle at which the wind strikes its feathered sails to prolong the course of its flight with the least possible effort. Seldom, except in very calm weather, may it be seen to alight upon the water, from which it rises with difficulty, running for some distance along the surface. The ends of the wings clear of the water, it turns towards the breeze, and rises into the air in a gentle curve, in exactly the same manner as a paper kite. That the albatross follows a ship for many days in succession, sleeping at night upon the water, and coming up with her in the morning, there can be no doubt. We have watched them for several consecutive evenings during fine weather, in the latitude of the trade-winds, settling down on the water at sundown, and preening their feathers, until they became mere specks in the field of the telescope; but they were with us again in the morning soon after sunrise; some strangers among them perhaps, but several which, from some peculiarity of marking, we knew to be our companions of the day before. In one instance, a conspicuous mark had been made by a pistol-bullet in the wing of an old brown-headed and curiously pied bird, by which he could be identified beyond doubt. The second or third flight-feather had been shot away, leaving a clearly defined gap in the wing as it came between the light and the eye; and this bird followed us for three days after having been fired at, though we had been sailing an average of nearly eight knots an hour. One of the most striking examples of their endurance on the wing, however, is the fact, which we have more than once observed, that the same birds which had been unweariedly following us in the day, accompanied us throughout the whole of the succeeding night, as could be easily verified by the light of the moon.

It is a not uncommon practice with passengers to endeavour to catch these noble birds by a bait fastened to a hook and buoyed with corks. That such a cruel practice should ever be tolerated, even to relieve the monotony of the voyage, is to us inconceivable, and can only be accounted for as the last resource of a brutally morbid fancy.

The albatross is essentially the scavenger of the ocean, and we doubt whether it makes any attempt to capture living fish unless when very hungry, for we have seen flying-fish rising in quantities while the albatrosses made no attempt to catch them. That the nautilus is sometimes eaten is evident, for we have taken it from the stomach; but the chief food is dead fish and other refuse. In the South Atlantic we passed the dead body of a small whale, on and around which were at least a hundred of these birds, either gorged or gorging themselves with the blubber; and guns discharged at them failed to induce many of them to take wing. We had on one occasion an opportunity of observing how rapidly these birds collect about a carcass. Like vultures or ravens, when an animal dies they discover it very speedily, and flock to the scene of the banquet. On a hot still evening in the South Atlantic a horse died, and when cast overboard next morning, the gases already formed by decomposition enabled it to float. The few albatrosses in our company immediately settled down upon it; but in less than an hour we could see through the telescope a great cloud of the birds on the sea and hovering round the unexpected prize, the almost entire absence of wind having kept us within two or three miles of the spot. It may be that the (usually) white plumage enables stragglers, far out of human ken, to see their fellows gathering in the neighbourhood of food; others again from still more remote distances may see them, and so on; until stragglers over hundreds of miles of space may be gathered to one common rendezvous.

The greater part of the year is passed by them at a distance from land; but they flock to barren and almost inaccessible rocks to breed. There the female lays her one dirty-white egg in a slight depression upon the bare earth, the sitters being frequently so close together that it is difficult to walk without touching them. They are totally indifferent to the presence of man, and merely indicate their resent of his intrusion into their nursery by snapping at him as he passes. The parents share the labour of incubation and rearing the young, and when this is over, they all go seawards together, and silence and solitude once more reign where all had lately been clamorous and busy life.

The range of the albatross is very considerable, and it may be met with to the extreme limits of the temperate zones of both hemispheres, in the South Atlantic and North and South Pacific Oceans, both at sea and near headlands and isolated rocks. During the months of May and June in the northern, and the months of November and December in the southern hemisphere these rocks are tenanted by countless numbers of albatrosses and their smaller brown relations, known to sailors under the name of 'Mollymawks'. No one who has visited an albatross nursery will readily forget the scene. Placidly sitting upon the one precious egg is the parent, male or female as the case may be; and as far as the eye can reach

over the surface, the rock is crowded with the sitters, indifferent to the presence of the human visitor. They know nothing of man's destructive nature, and they fear him not. Many of them have never seen that curious biped before, and those which have chanced to see him on his ships and to have suffered from his guns, are more likely to have then regarded him as a part of the white-sailed monster which traversed their ocean domain, than a separate creature; and fail to recognise him as he 'molests their ancient solitary reign.'

While viewing the interminable white forms thus crouching upon the earth, above wheel in graceful circles hundreds of their mates, sending congratulations in a hoarse piping voice to those beneath on the progress of the all-important business of rearing the family. Here and there sit callow uncouth nestlings; and from seawards come the parents to discharge the contents of their maws into the insatiable stomachs of the expectant young. Now and again one of the 'bread-winners' of the family swoops past the observer on its twelve feet of outspread wings, so near that he feels the shock of the divided air, and can realise the immense strength of the muscles which propel the creature, who, however, is a coward in spite of his size; for the skua gull, a bird many times smaller than himself, will often attack him and compel him to disgorge the product of his last foraging expedition.

As soon as the albatross has reared its young, a penguin frequently takes possession of the deserted nest, and in the very cradle of a bird destined to traverse the ocean on unwearied wings lies a nestling whose wings will never develop into anything more than a pair of paddles! Great numbers of albatrosses are caught by the natives of the North Pacific coasts, who use the inflated intestines as floats for their fishing-nets, and barter the hollow wing-bones with traders for the European markets—these bones being familiar to us as pipe-stems. The large webbed feet when inflated make good tobacco-pouches. We have also seen the quills of the flight-feathers converted into floats for roach-fishing; and many a Thames angler patiently watches from his chair in the punt a feather which has probably helped to carry its former owner over the length and breadth of the Pacific.

A NOVEL LIFE-BOAT.

Mr J. Manes of Fourth Avenue, Newhaven, Connecticut, has invented a new kind of life-boat which seems to possess features worthy of notice. 'His boat consists of a hollow globe of metal or wood, ballasted at the bottom, so that it will always right itself immediately on touching the water, and can never capsize even in the roughest sea. It has compartments for water, medical stores and provisions, bull's-eyes to let in the light, a door for ingress and egress, a porthole for hoisting signals to the mast, comfortable seats all around the inside for the passengers, and a hollow mast for supplying fresh air, and for carrying off that which has become vitiated. On the outside of the Globe boat runs a gallery, for the use of sailors in rowing, hoisting sail, discharging rockets, or steering. Of course the cases would be very rare when rowing, sailing, or steer-

ing would be required, but in case of need, all three could be easily managed.'

In such a boat—which is like a large buoy fitted with a mast—the passengers would be protected from rain and wind, and consequently to a great extent from cold. This seems to us to be a very important point, as many a shipwrecked person escapes drowning only to perish from exposure to the weather. Mr Manes suggests that a propeller might be attached to the boat to be worked by a crank turned by the passengers on the inside. It is calculated that a boat twelve feet in diameter would carry about fifty passengers, and that it could be carried on deck or hung over the stern on davits, in either of which positions it might be used as a cabin during the voyage; and further, if hung on a universal point like a compass, it would retain its equilibrium no matter what the motion of the ship might be, thus affording a safe retreat for persons subject to sea-sickness.

A W A'.

LINES WRITTEN ON THE DEATH OF JEANIE, A FAVOURITE CHILD, AGED SEVEN YEARS.

Thou'rt ay lyin' could an' still, my bonnie bonnie;
The dew's o' death lie heavy on thy broo;
Thy sunny smile nae mair will thrill this bosom;
Thy sweet blue een are dark an' sightless noo!

Hushed is thy fairy tread, my bonnie bonnie;
Thy lips sae rosy red, I'll kiss nae mair.
O heavy thoct, that dims this ee wi' sadness!
O heart that fain wad break, wi' anguish sair!

I cry thy name in vain, my bonnie bonnie;
For aye thy form, thy dear-loved form I see;
O face sae fair! O locks o' golden splendour!
O guileless heart, that fondly throbb'd for me!

A dreary blank is mine, my bonnie bonnie;
Nae mair thy merry voice will cheer my hie;
An eerie stillness fills the darksome dwelling,
Since thou, my sweetest flower, wert ta'en awa'!

The angels cam' for thee, my bonnie bonnie,
As softly flicker'd out life's feeble flame;
The tender Shepherd took thee to His bosom,
An' left me wi' a lanely, lanely hame!

But oh! thou'rt w' the blest, my bonnie bonnie,
Where pain will rend thy gentle breast nae mair;
Oh, when this weary heart flays down its sorrow,
My ain wee lassie, may I meet thee there!

JAMES SMITH.

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2d. To insure the return of papers that may prove ineligible, postage-stamps should in every case accompany them.

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4th. MS. should be written on one side of the leaf only.

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IN THE GLOAMING.

To us Northerners few expressions convey such a sense of peace and beauty as this of 'in the gloaming.' The twilight hour has had its singers and idealisers ever since poetry found a voice and made itself a power over men; and so long as human nature is as it is now—impressible, yearning, influenced by the mystery of nature and the sacredness of beauty—so long will the tenderness of the gloaming find its answering echo in the soul, and the sweet influences of the hour be repeated in the depth of the emotions and the purity of the thoughts.

Between the light and the dark—or as we have it in our dear old local tongue, 'twixt the gloamin' an' the mirk'—what a world of precious memories and holy suggestions lies enshrined! The French *entre chien et loup* (between dog and wolf) is a poor equivalent for our 'gloaming;' and going farther south the thing is as absent as the expression. To be sure the sweet Ave Maria of the evening is to the pious Catholic all that the twilight is to us; when the church bells ring out the hour for prayer, and the sign that the day's work is done, and the hurrying crowd stands for a moment hushed, with uplifted hands and reverent faces raised to heaven, each man bare-headed as he says his prayer, calling on Madonna to help him and his. But in the fervid countries which lie in the sunshine from winter to autumn and from dawn to dark, there is no gloaming as we have it. The sun goes down in a cloudless glory of burnished gold or blazing red, of sullen purple or of pearly opalescence; and then comes darkness swift and sudden as the overflowing of a tidal river; but of the soft gray luminous twilight—of that lingering after-glow of sky and air which we Northerners know and love—there is not a trace. Just as with the people themselves it is brilliant youth and glorious maturity, but for the most part an old age without dignity or charm. Nothing is so rare in southern climates as to see an old woman with that noble yet tender majesty, that gloaming of the mind and body, which makes

so many among us as beautiful in their own way at seventy as they were at twenty. They fade as suddenly as their twilight; and the splendour of the day dies into the blackness of the night with scarce a trace of that calm, soft, peaceful period when it is still light enough for active life and loving duties, after the fervour of the noon has gone and before the dead dark has come.

The gloaming is the hour for some of the dearest circumstances of life; when heart grows nearer to heart, and there seems to be almost another sense granted for the perception of spiritual things. It is the hour when young lovers wander through the green lanes between the hawthorn and the clematis, while the nightingale sings in the high elm-tree, and the white moths flit by like winged ghosts or float like snow-flakes in the dusk. Or if it is in the winter-time, they sit in the bay of the window half hidden by the curtains, half revealed by the dying light, as is their own love. They have no need of speech. Nature and the gloaming are the voices between them which whisper in sigh and overcome all that the one longs to tell and the other yearns to hear; and the silence of their lips is the truest eloquence of their hearts. In the full blaze of daylight that silence would be oppressive or chilling. It would tell either too much or not enough; but in the twilight, when speech would be intrusive and commonplace, the mute influences of the hour are the best expressions of the soul. In meadow and wood and garden the scents of flowers and sprouting leaves, of moss and ferns and bark and bud, are more fragrant now than in the freshness of even the early dawn—that childhood of the day! They too come like the voices of Nature, telling softly secrets which the day cannot reveal. Everything is dreamy, indeterminate, and full of possibilities not yet realised. The moon is only a disc of unsubstantial vapour hanging softly in the sky, where the sunset tones still linger; the stars are faint uncertain points scarcely visible through the quivering chromatic haze; but gradually all this mystery will sharpen into the confessed beauty of the night, when the pale pure splendour of the

moon, the glorious brightness of the stars, will take the place of the gloaming. As yet it is all softened colour and chastened tenderness; all silence yet eloquence; and the young lovers wandering by the scented hedgerows, or sitting in the bay of the window—they in the soft glow of the twilight, while the ruddy firelight floods the rest of the room—are in that perfect harmony with the circumstances round them of which the other name is happiness. Yes, the gloaming is the hour of love, as which of us does not know who has ever loved at all! Look back over the lapse of years, and see now what you saw then. You are walking on that broad path up the lone fell-side. The young bracken is sending out its rich scents, mixed with the odour of thyme and the sweetness of the golden gorse; the swallows are wheeling for their last rapid flights; the homing rooks are straggling wearily to the elms; the lark is singing faintly in his descent; and the honey-laden bees fly heavily to their hives. Do you not remember the thoughts, the emotions which made life for you at that moment a heavenly poem such as an angel might have written? Do you not remember the love which swelled your heart, and lifted it up from earth to the very footstool of God? Never can you forget the exquisite delight, the unfathomable revelations of that hour! It was in the gloaming when you told your love and knew that you were beloved, when the rack and the pain of doubt were finally set to rest, and the joy of certainty was established! That hour shaped your life for weal—alas! sometimes for woe to follow after! But in all the woe of the loss, you have the imperishable weal of the gain, and are richer by the love that you gave as well as by that which you received—by the memories that will never die, and the emotions which you can never forget!

The gloaming is the children's hour, when mamma sings sweet songs, or plays for them brisk and lively music, to which they dance like shadowy sprites in and out from the dusk to the light. Or what is still dearer, she gathers them all close, about her, the elder ones touching her knees, clinging to her shoulders, while the little one of all is in her arms half asleep in a cloud of fairy dreams of vague delight, as its curly head rests on her bosom, and the sweet soft voice lulls its senses into a state of enchantment, to which no opiate of after-time gives aught that is like. Then she tells them stirring tales of bold knights and lovely ladies, and how faith and courage conquered all the dangers that beset them, and brought them to good issues through evil paths. Or in a lower voice, she speaks to them of the great God in heaven, who through all His supreme might and majesty, can condescend even to the wants of a little child; and she tells them of the sinless angels; and of that dear Lord who came on the earth to save weak men from the consequences of their own wilful wickedness. She speaks to them of His purity, His love, His tenderness, and of the pattern left us in His life, by which we may all walk if we will. And to the end of their lives they remember those lessons of the quiet gloaming. One may go out into wild lands and live there with graceless men and Godless companions; but in the midst of all the evil which surrounds him, the mother's words spoken when he was a little lad at her knee, come back like cool rains in the parching

drought; and the crust of carelessness and something worse breaks from his soul as memory leads him back into what was the truest and holiest Church of his youth. Or the girl—she who now sits with her big blue eyes fixed on her mother, shining with pitying tears for the sorrows of the divine Son of Man, for the trials of suffering saint and heroic martyr—when she is thrown into the great world of fashion and dissipation to become a 'leader of society,' surrounded by temptations of all kinds—she too will remember this hour, and all that she learned and felt at her mother's side. She will turn back to the holy lessons of piety and humility, of modesty and honour, taught her then by one who fulfilled those lessons in her own life; and she will be strengthened to meet her dangers from the memory of those pure defences. The mother's influence never wholly dies; and never is that influence more powerfully exerted, its traces more deeply engraved than in the gloaming, when the sweet, sad Bible stories are told in a low and loving voice, till the whole heart is stirred, and the deepest recesses of spiritual consciousness are reached.

The gloaming is the hour of the highest thoughts of which we may be capable; the hour when the poet sings his song in his own heart before he has written down the words on paper; when the painter sees his picture completed by the divine artistry of the imagination before he has set his palette or sketched in the outline; when the unformed and chaotic thought long floating in the brain, clears itself from the mists and takes definite shape, soon to become embodied in creation. The youth dreams of that splendid achievement which is to win the great game of fortune; he sees himself going up for his degree in advance of the rest, cheered by his companions, congratulated by the 'dons' as he comes out Double-first, or the Senior Wrangler of his year. Or he is pleading before the judge at a very early stage in his legal career, and winning the most important cause of the term—winning it by sheer hard work and strength of brain—with 'silk' and perhaps the woolsock to follow. Or he is in the House arguing for humanity against statecraft, for justice against oppression, for truth against falsehood, and carrying the majority with him—making men's hearts to burn within them by reason of his eloquence, his daring, and the intrinsic justice of his cause, for the first time indubitably proved by him. Or he has written his book, and wakes to find himself famous, the world lifting its cap to him in recognition of his success, and the critics united in praise, with not a surly note of blame in all the pack. Or he has painted his heroic picture—his art of the highest, his theme the most heroic—and the Royal Academy opens its doors with a clang to let him through. Or he has built his cathedral, and is not ashamed to look up at the lines of the old Abbey. Or he has invented his new engine, discovered his new planet, demonstrated the hidden law which so many suspect and no one has proved. It is the hour for all these grand dreams of ambition, all these fairy tales of hope; and if impossible at times to realise, yet they are good for the young mind to entertain; as it is good for the young athlete to try his strength against superior forces, and for the young bowman to aim higher than he can strike.

It is the hour when greatness, yet inchoate and

undeveloped, grows within its husk—the seed-time of future excellence through the fermentation of thought. There must be intervals of preparation, and this is one of them. The quiet spell of the gloaming, when the fairest visions are seen, the boldest wishes framed, the loftiest points reached—how useful it is if taken as the spring-board for the true leap—harmful enough if accepted as sufficient in itself; as if the hope, the wish, the incoherent intention were enough, and realisation always put off till the morrow, did not count. For there is ever the danger that day-dreaming should become a habit, and that a man should be contented with fashioning a thought in his brain without caring to embody it in deed. But there is always danger of misuse in all things; and the fear of falling is no bad help towards keeping one's footing firm when the path is slippery and the way-marks treacherous.

The gloaming is the hour for quiet retrospection of the hours that are past, for fearless unlooking to those which are to come, and for closer communing with God and one's own soul. The day is flowing into the night through the golden gate of the twilight, just as fervid youth and fragrant womanhood, the strength of manhood and the leader's power, are passing through the calm rest of old age into the stillness of death. In the gloaming, the soul seems to see the right value and the true shapes of things more clearly than it did when the sun was high, and the eyes were dazzled with its shine and the blood fevered with its heat. Then passion was strong, and with passion, self-will, false aims, false beliefs—and disappointment as the shadow lying behind. If the power was there to create, to resist, to combat, to subdue, so also was the bitter smart and the cruel blow. And there was the inevitable deception of the senses. Then the sunlight fell on the stagnant waters of the deadly swamp and turned them into lakes of purest gold, which a wise man would spend his time well to seek and his strength to possess. Now in the twilight the false shine has faded from the low-lying pools, and the dank and deadly mists creep up to mark both their place and quality. If only he had known the truth of things in time! If only he had not believed that marsh-lands were living lakes of golden waters, which a man would do well to give his life to gain!

In the daytime, clouds obscured the sun, so that the impatient and sore-hearted said in his bitterness that the god had turned his face from the earth and from him, and that to-morrow's glory would never rise. Now in the gloaming the hope of that morrow has already lessened in anticipation the evil done by the clouds of to-day, and trust and hope come in the place of sorrow and despair. The worst has been—make room now for the better. No more false seeming and no more blinding by the deceived and flattered senses; no more misdirection of energy, and taking for pure and beautiful waters of life deadly morasses and stagnant marsh. The gloaming of life sets a man straight not only with himself but with things, and gives him a truer knowledge than he ever had before. He stands full face to the west and looks into the light, which now he can bear, and which he no longer finds bewildering or blinding. That time of tumult and passion, of heat and strife, through which he has passed, how glad he is to leave it all behind him while waiting, watching for the quiet

peace of the night through the tender softness of the gloaming! How near and yet how far off seem to him the unfulfilled hopes of the morning, the mistaken endeavour of the noon, the hard labour and fierce struggle of the day! If he had only known in time the things which were best for him, how differently he would have acted—and now: God's will be done, and God pardon all his sins! He must take things as they stand, trusting in the unfailing mercy; for if repentance is good, regret is vain, and the gloaming is for peace, not strife.

Slowly the last rays of the sun fade out of the sky, and the lingering light as slowly follows. The world lies hushed as a tired sleeper, and the moon and the stars come out as watchers—as signs too of other worlds and other lives. But the old man sitting pale and peaceful in the house-porch knows now what he no longer sees; for the gloaming of his life has passed into the deep stillness of something beyond, as the day has flowed into the night, and both lie in the hollow of God's right hand.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XIV.—THE SHARING OF THE SPOIL.

THE name of Mr Enoch Wilkins, Solicitor in the High Court of Chancery, and Attorney-at-law, before, according to the polite legal fiction, the Queen herself at Westminster, was deeply inscribed, in fat black engraved characters, on a gleaming brass plate which formed the chief adornment of the dark-green door of his City office. If this brass plate really did gleam, as it did, like a piece of burnished gold, its refulgence was due to unremitting exertions on the part of the office lad, whose oburgations were frequent as at unholy matutinal hours he plied the obdurate metal with rottenstone, oiled flannels, and chamois leather. For the atmosphere of St Nicholas Poultry (so named from the hideous effigy of a begrimed saint, motled by frost and blackened by soot, which yet decorated the low-browed doorway of a damp little church hard by) was not conducive to brilliancy, whether of glass, brass, or paint, being heavily charged, on the average of days, with tainted air, foul moisture, and subdivided carbon, with rust, dust, and mildew. Nevertheless Mr Wilkins, who was a master to be obeyed, contrived that his plate-glass windows should flash back whatever rays of light the pitying sun might deign to direct on so dismal a region, girt in and stifled by a wilderness of courts, lanes, streets, and yards, and also that door-handles and bell-pulls should be shining and spotless as a sovereign new-minted, the door-step a slab of unsullied stone, and passage, staircase, and offices as trim and clean as the floors of some lavender-scented farmhouse among the caberghouses of Cheshire. These praiseworthy results were not attained without labour, sustained and oft renewed, on the part of Mrs Flanagan, the so-called laundress, whose washing was effected by the vigorous application of scrubbing-brush and Bath-brick; of a melancholy window-cleaner from Eastcheap, whose bread was earned by perpetual acrobatic feats on narrow sills and outside ledges; and of the office lad already mentioned, whose main duties, though he called himself a clerk, were those of keeping the externals of his master's place of business at the utmost pitch of polish.

In very truth, although there was a messenger, fleet of foot and cunning in threading his way through the labyrinthine intricacies of the City, always perched on a leather-covered stool in the antechamber, to supplement the services of the office lad, Mr Wilkins had no clerk. A great deal of his business was transacted by word of mouth; he answered his own letters; and when much of the scribe's work became requisite, some civic law stationer would send in one or two red-eyed men in mouldy black, with finger-nails indelibly stained by the ink that had become their owners' element, and a sufficient quantity of draught folio paper would be covered with legal copperplate.

The outer office was neatness itself, from the bright fire-irons in the fender to the maps on the wall and the rulers and pewter inkstands on the desks. And the inner room, where the lawyer himself gave audience, was almost cheerful, with its well-brushed Turkey carpet, sound furniture, well-stored book-shelves, and general aspect of snug comfort. There were those who wondered that Mr Wilkins, whose reputation did not rank very high in the learned confraternity to which he belonged, should so pointedly have deviated from the tradition which almost prescribes dirt and squalor and darkness for the surroundings of those who live by the law. There were, not very far off, most respectable firms, the name of whose titled employers was Legion, yet through whose cobwebbed panes was filtered the feeble light by which their bewildered clients stumbled among ragged carpets and rickety furniture to reach the well-known beehive chair. But Mr Wilkins was a man capable of attending to his own interests, and probably he had found out what best chimed with the prejudices of those for whose custom he angled.

There was nothing in the room itself to shew that it was a lawyer's office. It might have been that of a surveyor or a promoter of companies, for there was nothing on the walls but a set of good maps and four or five excellent engravings. Not a deed-box, not a safe, was to be seen, and if there were law-books on the shelves they held their place unobtrusively amongst other well-bound volumes. Mr Wilkins sitting in his usual place, with one elbow resting on the table before him, seemed to be indulging in a reverie of no distasteful character, to judge by the smile that rested on his coarse mouth as he softly tapped his front teeth with the mother-of-pearl handle of a penknife, as though beating time to his thoughts. At last, warned by the striking of the office clock, the hour-hand of which pointed to eleven, Mr Wilkins shook off his preoccupation of mind, and rang the hand-bell at his elbow.

The office lad, who called himself a clerk, was prompt in answering the tinkling summons of his employer.

'Any one been here yet?' demanded the lawyer. 'Touchwood and Bowser's articulated clerk with notice of new trial in case of Green (in holy orders) v. Gripsom—the bill-stealing case, you know, sir, that the country parson chose to go to a jury about.'

'Ah, yes,' rejoined Mr Wilkins, again tapping his front teeth with the pearl-handled knife, while a look of intense amusement overspread his face. 'Wants another shot at the enemy, does he, the Rev. James Green! It was grand to see him in the witness-box, indignantly insisting on

the fact that not one sixpence ever reached him in return for his promissory-note despatched per post, on the faith of Mr Gripsom's advertisement and fair words. Then some Mr Jenks, a total stranger, happens to give valuable consideration, at third or fourth hand, for the stamped paper with the clergyman's signature, and, Rev. Green objecting to cash up, gets a *fi. fa.*—a neat contraction of *fieri facias*, which, as we lawyers know, is a term which directs an execution to be levied on the goods of a debtor, ha, ha!—has it backed in Wiltshire, and sells up every bed and chest of drawers in the vicarage. Mr Green brings an action against Gripsom, who is comfortably out of the way, but retains me. We traverse everything, demur to 'everything, put in counter pleas and rebutters, change the venue, and play Old Gooseberry with the too confiding Green, whose counsel elects to be nonsuited. Now, like a Briton, he is ready for us again.'

Mr Wilkins laughed, and the juvenile clerk re-echoed the laugh. Sharp practice, such as that so lovingly narrated by the attorney, apparently for lack of a better audience, was congenial to the mind of this keen-witted young acolyte of Themis, with whom the proverbial distinction between Law and Equity seemed to be very clearly defined.

'Nobody else called?' asked Mr Wilkins.

'Yes. Stout sporting-looking gent, who said he'd make shift, when I told him you had stepped out to the Master's chambers, to come again to-morrow. Name of Prior,' returned the youth.

'Ah, Nat the bookmaker, wanting to know how near the wind he may sail without getting into the sweep-net of a criminal indictment,' said the lawyer placidly. 'Nothing else, hey?'

'Only Mr Isaacs of Bowline Court, Thames Street, sent round to say he would look in between eleven and twelve,' was the reply.

'I'll see him and any gentleman he may bring with him,' rejoined Mr Wilkins, taking up the newspaper, as the office lad retired; but in five minutes returned, ushering in three gentlemen, whose hooked noses, full red lips, jet-black hair, and aloe-black eyes gave them a strong family resemblance. They were old acquaintances doubtless, for the greeting which they received from Mr Wilkins was a familiar one.

'How do, Moss? How goes it, Braham, my buck? You're all right, Isaacs, I can see for myself.'

Nothing could well be more unlike what, during the regency of the late King George IV., was called a buck than was Mr Braham, who was simply a corpulent Jew, ineffably greasy in appearance, and who wore a faded olive-green greatcoat that might have passed for a mediæval garbardin, and carried an empty blue bag over his left arm. Mr Moss, his junior by some years, was better dressed, but his raven locks fell upon a shirt collar of dubious whiteness, and his dingy finger-nails were in unpleasant contrast with the splendour of the heavy rings he wore, and of the huge emerald in his satin necktie. The youngest of the three, Mr Isaacs, a hawk-eyed little man, bejewelled and florid of attire, was by far in dress and person the least unclean of the three.

There was a little conversation as to weather and other general topics, and then Braham the senior of the three Hebrews pulled out a watch as round and almost as big as a golden turnip,

and compared it with the office clock. 'Letsh get along,' he said genially: 'bushiness, bushiness, my dears, waitsh for no man.'

'You're right, Uncle Jacob,' chimed in Mr Moss, who could scarcely have been, otherwise than figuratively and in oriental fashion, the nephew of his stout kinsman, but who was certainly a Jew of a much more modern pattern. He, at anyrate, coquetted with soap and water, and had discarded the shibboleth in his speech; but it might be doubted whether the elder Israelite, for all his repellent exterior, was not the better fellow of the two.

'Business by all means,' cheerily responded Mr Wilkins. 'We've done it together before to-day, and we'll do it again, I hope, gentlemen, for many a day yet to come. It is a very pleasant occasion on which we now assemble—nothing less, if I may say so, than the dividing of the profits, the sharing of the spoil.'

'There was a hearty laugh.

'Sharing of the spoil!' chuckled elderly but still vigorous Mr Braham. 'What a boy he ish, thish Wilkinsh, what a boy he ish!'

'And now for it,' said Mr Wilkins, rustling over a bundle of papers that lay before him. 'Here we have it in black and white, worth all the patter and palaver in the world. These are the baronet's first and second letters, the second inclosing an uncommonly stiff cheque. Here are Captain Denzil's bills—pretty bits of kites they are, renewed here and renewed there—and here are our old agreements, notes, and memoranda, duplicates of which I've no doubt are in all your pockets. Pass them round, Isaacs, and take a good look at them first. You're an attorney, you know, and that's why you're here, though I don't believe, my friend, that you "pull off" a clear five hundred out of the haul.'

'Yesh, yesh, he'ish an attorney, ash Wilkinsh saysh,' said Mr Braham, whose laughter was very ready, as that of fat people often is; 'and sho we have him here. Shet a thief to catch a—'

Here a warning kick or other practical exhortation to caution on the part of his kinsman appeared to cut short the over-fluency of the bulky Hebrew, and he became as mute as a mouse, while Mr Isaacs read aloud in a high shrill voice the contents of Sir Sykes Denzil's letters and also a brief summary which Mr Wilkins had prepared.

There was some discussion, but there really was not room for much. Here was no compromise, no handing over of so many shillings in the pound. Sir Sykes Denzil had paid his son's liabilities without the abatement of a guinea. Mr Braham was to receive what he called 'shix thousand odd.' Mr Moss, two thousand eight hundred and seventy-two; four hundred and thirty were for Mr Isaacs; and the residue was for Enoch Wilkins, Esquire, gentleman.

It was a strange sight when the rolls of bank-notes were produced, to see the actual partition of the Bank of England's promises to pay, the vulture beaks bending over the crisp paper, the wary inspection of water-mark and number and signature, and the stuffing of pocket-books and cramming of purses and stowing away of what seemed to be regarded rather as plunder than as lawful gains. Two odd things during this transaction were to be noticed—first, that Mr Braham, who was incomparably the shabbiest Jew

present, met with deference on every hand save from irreverent Wilkins; and secondly, that all the Jews seemed to take up their money grudgingly, like hounds that have chopped their fox in covert.

'Well done, Shir Shykesh!' exclaimed the heavy Hebrew with the green galabande and the blue bag. 'If they wash all of hish sort, there might be the moneybag, but there wouldn't be the fun!'

'We'll drink Sir Sykes' health, at anyrate,' briskly put in Mr Wilkins.—'Sims!' and he tinkled the office hand-bell as he spoke, glasses and cork-screw.

It was good amber-hued sherry, none of your modern abominations, but a real Spanish vintage, long mellowed in its dusty bin, that gurgled into the glasses under the careful handling of Mr Wilkins. The Hebrews sipped, appraised—where could be found judges so critical!—and drank. 'I'm shorry for the poor young man,' said Mr Braham, in a sort of outburst of sentiment, at mention of Captain Denzil's name.

'So that he gets his victuals,' remarked the Jew attorney curtly, 'I don't see why he's to be pitied.'

'It ish a shelling out!' was the mild rejoinder of the stout Israelite with the blue bag, who seemed to be by far the softest-hearted of the company. 'Of course, when I thought he would do me, I didn't care; but now I remember he didn't get much, not above seven-fifty cash. All the rest wash pictures, wine—not like yours, Wilkinsh—sigars, and open-tickets.'

'He went through the mill, I suppose,' said Mr Moss, 'as others have done before him, and others will do after him; eh, Uncle Jacob?'

'Eh, eh, grisht to the mill!' chuckled the stout proprietor of the empty blue bag; and the quartette of confederates soon separated.

Mr Wilkins, left alone, purred contentedly as he poured out and tossed off another glass of the sherry so deservedly lauded, and then, rising from his chair, took down a Baronetage, bound in pink and gold, and fluttered over the leaves until his finger rested on the words: 'Denzil, Sir Sykes; of Carbery Chase, county Devon; of Threepham Lodge, Yorkshire; Ermine Moot, Durham; and Malpas Wold, Cheshire, succeeded his father, Sir Harbottle Denzil, August 18—; married, May 18—; formerly in the army, and attained the rank of Major. Is a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant for Devonshire. Unsuccessfully contested the county at the election of 18—.'

'To think,' said the attorney, stroking the book with his fleshy hand, 'how much one can read between the lines of these plausible announcements, almost as blandly eulogistic as the inscriptions which chronicle on their tombstones fond wives, faultless husbands, and parents worthy to be immortalised by Plutarch! How trippingly the name of that needy old reprobate Sir Harbottle rolls off the tongue. He to be described as of Threepham and Malpas! Say, rather, of any foreign lodging or foreign jail, of the Isle of Man while it was yet a sanctuary for the debtor, of the Rules of the King's Bench. But Carbery is very genuine anyhow.'

Mr Wilkins paused for a moment, and then mused. 'I could spoil your little game, Sir Sykes—spoil it in a moment, and compel you to exchange your D. L.'s uniform of scarlet and gold for—never mind what! So long as the goose lays the

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'Only Mr Isaacs of Bowline Court, Thames Street, sent round to say he would look in between eleven and twelve,' was the reply.

'I'll see him and any gentleman he may bring with him,' rejoined Mr Wilkins, taking up the newspaper, as the office lad retired; but in five minutes returned, ushering in three gentlemen, whose hooked noses, full red lips, jet-black hair, and sloe-black eyes gave them a strong family resemblance. They were old acquaintances doubtless, for the greeting which they received from Mr Wilkins was a familiar one.

'How do, Moss? How goes it, Braham, my buck? You're all right, Isaacs, I can see for myself.'

Nothing could well be more unlike what, during the regency of the late King George IV., was called a buck than was Mr Braham, who was simply a corpulent Jew, ineffably greasy in appearance, and who wore a faded olive-green greatcoat that might have passed for a medieval gabardine, and carried an empty blue bag over his left arm. Mr Moss, his junior by some years, was better dressed, but his raven locks fell upon a shirt collar of dubious whiteness, and his dingy finger-nails were in unpleasant contrast with the splendour of the heavy rings he wore, and of the huge emerald in his satin necktie. The youngest of the three, Mr Isaacs, a hawk-eyed little man, bejewelled and florid of attire, was by far in dress and person the least unclean of the three.

There was a little conversation as to weather and other general topics, and then Braham the senior of the three Hebrews pulled out a watch as round and almost as big as a golden turnip,

and compared it with the office clock. 'Let'sh get along,' he said gently. 'bushiness, bushiness, my dears, wait for no man.'

'You're right, Uncle Jacob,' chimed in Mr. Moss, who could scarcely have been, otherwise than figuratively and in oriental fashion, the nephew of his stout kinsman, but who was certainly a Jew of a much more modern pattern. He, at any rate, coquetted with soap and water, and had discarded the shibboleth in his speech; but it might be doubted whether the elder Israelite, for all his repellent exterior, was not the better fellow of the two.

'Business by all means,' cheerily responded Mr. Wilkins. 'We've done it together before to-day, and we'll do it again, I hope, gentlemen, for many a day yet to come. It is a very pleasant occasion on which we now assemble—nothing less, if I may say so, than the dividing of the profits, the sharing of the spoil.'

There was a hearty laugh.

'Sharing of the spoil!' chuckled elderly but still vigorous Mr. Braham. 'What a boy he ish, thish Wilkinsh, what a boy he ish!'

'And now for it,' said Mr. Wilkins, rustling over a bundle of papers that lay before him. 'Here we have it in black and white, worth all the patter and palaver in the world. These are the baronet's first and second letters, the second inclosing an undeniably stiff cheque. Here are Captain Denzil's bills—pretty bits of kites they are, renewed here and renewed there—and here are our old agreements, notes, and memoranda, duplicates of which I've no doubt are in all your pockets. Pass them round, Isaacs, and take a good look at them first. You're an attorney, you know, and that's why you're here, though I don't believe, my friend, that you "pull off" a clear five hundred out of the haul.'

'Yesh, yesh, he'sh an attorney, ash Wilkinsh saysh,' said Mr. Braham, whose laughter was very ready, as that of fat people often is; 'and sho we have him here. Shet a thiet to catch a'—

Here a warning kick or other practical exhortation to caution on the part of his kinsman appeared to cut short the over-fluency of the bulky Hebrew, and he became as mute as a mouse, while Mr. Isaacs read aloud in a high shrill voice the contents of Sir Sykes Denzil's letters and also a brief summary which Mr. Wilkins had prepared.

There was some discussion, but there really was not room for much. Here was no compromise, no handing over of so many shillings in the pound. Sir Sykes Denzil had paid his son's liabilities without the abatement of a guinea. Mr. Braham was to receive what he called 'shix thousand odd'; Mr. Moss two thousand eight hundred and seventy-two; four hundred and thirty were for Mr. Isaacs; and the residue was for Enoch Wilkins, Esquire, gentleman.

It was a strange sight when the rolls of bank-notes were produced, to see the actual partition of the Bank of England's promises to pay, the vulture heads bending over the crisp paper, the wary inspection of water-mark and number and signature, and the stuffing of pocket-books and cramming of purses and stowing away of what seemed to be regarded rather as plunder than as lawful gains. Two odd things during this transaction were to be noticed—first, that Mr. Braham, who was incomparably the shabbiest Jew

present, met with deference on every hand save from irreverent Wilkins; and secondly, that all the Jews seemed to take up their money grudgingly, like hounds that have chopped their fox in covert.

'Well done, Shir Shykes!' exclaimed the heavy Hebrew with the green gabardine and the blue bag. 'If they wash all of hish short, there might be the moneys, but there wouldn't be the fun!'

'We'll drink Sir Sykes' health, at any rate,' briskly put in Mr. Wilkins.—'Sims!' and he tinkled the office hand-bell as he spoke, 'glasses and cork-screw.'

It was good amber-hued sherry, none of your modern abominations, but a real Spanish vintage, long mellowed in its dusty bin, that gurgled into the glasses under the careful handling of Mr. Wilkins. The Hebrews sipped, appraised—where could be found judges so critical!—and drank.

'I'm shorry for the poor young man,' said Mr. Braham, in a sort of outburst of sentiment, at mention of Captain Denzil's name.

'So that he gets his victuals,' remarked the Jew attorney curtly, 'I don't see why he's to be pitied.'

'It is a shelling out!' was the mild rejoinder of the stout Israelite with the blue bag, who seemed to be by far the softest-hearted of the company. 'Of course, when I thought he would do me, I didn't care; but now I remember he didn't get much, not above shoven-fifty cash. All the rest wash pictures, wine—like yours, Wilkinsh—cigars, and opera-tickets.'

'He went through the mill, I suppose,' said Mr. Moss, 'as others have done before him, and others will do after him; eh, Uncle Jacob?'

'Eh, eh, grisht to the mill!' chuckled the stout proprietor of the empty blue bag; and the quartette of confederates soon separated.

Mr. Wilkins, left alone, purred contentedly as he poured out and tossed off another glass of the sherry so deservedly lauded, and then, rising from his chair, took down a Baronetage, bound in pink and gold, and flattered over the leaves until his finger rested on the words: 'Denzil, Sir Sykes; of Carbery Chase, county Devon; of Threephram Lodge, Yorkshire; Ermine Moot, Durham; and Malpas Wold, Cheshire, succeeded his father, Sir Harbottle Denzil, August 18—; married, May 18—; formerly in the army, and attained the rank of Major. Is a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant for Devonshire. Unsuccessfully contested the county at the election of 18—.'

'To think,' said the attorney, stroking the book with his fleshy hand, 'how much one can read between the lines of these plausible announcements, almost as blandly eulogistic as the inscriptions which chronicle on their tombstones fond wives, faultless husbands, and parents worthy to be immortalised by Plutarch! How trippingly the name of that needy old reprobate Sir Harbottle rolls off the tongue. He to be described as of Threephram and Malpas! Say, rather, of any foreign lodging or foreign jail, of the Isle of Man while it was yet a sanctuary for the debtor, of the Rules of the King's Bench. But Carbery is very genuine anyhow.'

Mr. Wilkins paused for a moment, and then mused. 'I could spoil your little game, Sir Sykes—spoil it in a moment, and compel you to exchange your D. L.'s uniform of scarlet and gold for—never mind what! So long as the goose lays the

golden eggs, it would not be the part of a wise man to twist her neck.' Having said which, Mr Wilkins brushed his coat, drew on his gloves, and taking up his hat, sallied out. 'Taxing office; back in an hour,' he said to the office lad as he went out. 'If I am detained, you need not wait for me after two o'clock.'

'Ten to four, he don't shew up,' said the youth, who was accustomed to the professional figments which served to beguile credulous clients, but who congratulated himself at the prospect of a speedy release from duty. 'If the governor doesn't put in an appearance by 1.30, I'll make myself scarce, or my name is not Sims!'

Meanwhile, Mr Wilkins made his way through the jostling crowd that roared and seethed among the busy streets of the City, until he reached an office, resplendent with plate-glass and French-polished mahogany, in Cornhill, on the door of which was inscribed, 'Bales and Beales, Stock and Share Brokers.'

There were a good many customers in the outer office, a few of whom were quiet men of business, while the others, nearly half of whom were anxious-eyed ladies who had reached middle life, seemed flushed and ill at ease as they perused and reperused the written and printed memoranda with which they all seemed to be provided, and glanced impatiently at the ornamental clock on its gilded bracket. The lawyer, as an *habitué* of the place, sent in his name, and gained speedy admittance to the inner den, where Mr Bales himself, tall, thin, and with a thatch of bushy eyebrows projecting in pent-house fashion over his steady blue eyes, held out a cool white hand to be grasped by the hot red hand of Mr Wilkins.

The head of the firm of Bales and Beales was pre-eminently a cool man, and nothing could be in stronger contrast than was his unimpassioned bearing and the flutter and flurry of his customers.

'How about my Turks?' unceremoniously demanded Mr Wilkins. 'Of course I know they're down again—confound them!'

'The fall continues. They have receded, let me see, two and seven-eighths since this morning,' returned the broker, pointing to the official bulletin in its frame on the wall beside him. 'Probably they are falling as we speak, for the Bourses of Paris, Amsterdam, and Vienna opened heavily.'

'Well, you are a Job's comforter, Bales,' said the lawyer, wiping his heated brow. 'Will this sort of thing go on, hey? Shall I sell, or stick to my colours like a Briton? Can't you give a fellow your advice?'

'I never advise,' answered Mr Bales, with his cold smile. 'Life would be a burden to me if I did. I prefer to lay the facts before those who do me the favour to come to me, leaving to their unbiased judgment the course to pursue. Here are some Stock Exchange telegrams, part of which you will see presently, no doubt, in the evening papers. They help to explain the rush on the part of the public to sell out.'

The attorney took the half-dozen square pieces of hastily printed paper, yet damp from the press, some of them, which Mr Bales courteously proffered him, and at a glance mastered their contents.

'Can rascally fabrications like this,' asked the attorney, in a glow of something like honest

indignation, 'impose upon the veriest gull in Christendom?'

'Ah!' answered the unmoved Mr Bales, scrutinising the despatch which his irate client held between his finger and thumb, 'you mean the rumour about the sale of the six Turkish ironroads to the Russian government? Popular credulity, my dear sir, would swallow more than that. You have overlooked the other telegram, which mentions that Adamopoulos and Nikopolos, the Greek bankers of Galatz, have declined to advance to the Porte at twenty per cent. the wherewithal to meet the next coupon of the Debt. That report has more weight with business-men than the nautical one. Will you give me instructions to sell?'

'No; but to buy!' rapped out Mr Wilkins, with suddenness. 'There must come a reaction soon. I'll take another ten thousand of the Imperial Ottomans. I know what you would say, Bales,' he added irritably: 'the cash I left on deposit won't cover the margin. Here'—and he produced the bank-notes that had fallen to his share in the division of that day—'are funds, and to spare.'

As the lawyer quitted the stock-broker's office he muttered between his set teeth: 'I stand to win; but at anyrate I know of back-play of a safer sort. Sir Sykes Denzil of Carbery, you are a sponge well worth the squeezing!'

SENSATIONAL REPORTING.

SCARCELY a week passes in which the newspaper press is not the medium of attracting the attention of the public to a *cause célèbre* of one kind or another. Crimes of brutal violence, of gross immorality, of wholesale fraud, have been so terribly prevalent of late, that we might almost believe that civilisation and crime are going hand in hand; certainly the horrors of the latter go a considerable way towards neutralising the blessings of the former, and cause us to pause in our self-congratulation upon the progress and enlightenment of the age in which we live. At but too frequent intervals some villain is held up before the public, and becomes, so to speak, fashionable for the period over which his trial extends.

Every class of society provides its recruits now and again for the ranks of the infamous, and no matter to which stratum the criminal belongs, one newspaper or another is sure to be ready to report, with a minuteness which could not be more detailed if it were inspired by personal animosity—every stage and incident of his crime, and if procurable and sufficiently sensational, to supply an epitome of his antecedent career.

When the influence of the press is properly taken into consideration, the responsibility of writing for it is a very serious one. To many thousands even in great centres of human life like London, Liverpool, Glasgow, or Edinburgh, the daily paper is almost the sole intellectual food sought for and within reach; and when we further consider the immense circulation of some of our newspapers, nearly approaching a quarter of a million a day, and when we think that each copy becomes the centre of an ever-increasing circle of information, we may reasonably assert that the penny paper, once held in contempt, is one of the most potent agents for good or evil which our generation possesses; and in proportion to the influ-

ences which it exerts, is the necessity of that influence being exerted in a right direction. So far as regards politics, theology, and social problems, each paper may legitimately represent a particular party or sect, and inculcate its particular views; but upon certain broad principles of morality, and as far as regards general rules for the inculcation and protection of public morals, there ought to be no difference of opinion at all.

Without question, the newspapers of our day are animated by a laudable desire to act for the moral as well as material welfare of the people, and could not accuse any one of them of voluntarily inserting matter having a tendency subversive to morality; but as to what is and what is not calculated to taint the public mind, the opinion of the press seems to be very undecided. Particularly is this the case with regard to the record of crime, which it is part of their duty to publish. It is unquestionably advisable that the public should be informed of every crime that is discovered; but the scope of the information to be given becomes a matter for careful consideration, and upon which some difference of opinion may reasonably be expected to exist.

What, it may be asked, is the object of a public report of the trial of a criminal? Presumably that by the knowledge of what has occurred the public may be on their guard against similar crimes, and that the story of detection and punishment may act as a deterrent; the first of these objects applying more particularly to what we may call the respectable classes, and the latter to the criminal, vicious, or viciously disposed. The story of crime should legitimately produce in the public mind a sense of indignation against the criminal, of pity for the victim, of personal caution; the criminal should not be considered a sort of social scapegoat, and the indignation should not be Pharisaical, but should have its origin in an abhorrence of the crime rather than of the criminal. To the viciously inclined the story of detected crime should be a warning and a deterrent, both on the score of fear of detection as also upon higher moral considerations. The history of crime or of a criminal career is invariably pitiable enough; but it is possible in some instances to invest it with a spurious interest, and even a sort of meretricious brilliancy which is calculated to work an immense amount of harm among a certain class of people.

The principal object of a newspaper report nowadays would seem to be to present the public with an exciting and dramatic narrative, rather than a calm, unimpassioned statement of facts; to write, in short, rather for their amusement than information. Undoubtedly few things increase the sale of a newspaper more than a graphic account of heart-rending scenes in Court, and the demeanour, for instance, of ladies who have been accommodated with seats on the bench! a style of reporting which seems to us to be little short of a breach of trust, inasmuch as it is pandering to that which it ought to suppress.

It may be said that in criminal cases it is well that the public should have the fullest possible details of the proceedings, so that they may follow them closely, and perhaps aid in the administration of justice; but as public comment upon cases still under trial is not recognised, the value of full reports is nullified so far as this con-

sideration is concerned. But if a judge, a man of eminent experience in human nature, learned in the law, and accustomed to the consideration of every variety of evidence; and twelve jurymen, well meaning, unprejudiced, of business habits and unimpassioned judgment, cannot be trusted to decide a case upon its merits, surely it would be unreasonable to suppose that the outside public could do better, reading as they do simply in print the words which may have had their significance increased immeasurably in either direction by the tone in which they were uttered, by the bearing of the speaker, and the voluntary or involuntary gestures which may have accompanied them.

When we read detailed accounts of the appearance of prisoners, verbatim reports of their most insignificant utterances; when we are given details of their meals; when we are told that one prisoner is dressed with scrupulous care, and that the affection existing between two other prisoners was very apparent to those in court; when we have a picture of the judge passing sentence amidst sobbing women; when poignant details of past careers are dragged to light, and the various amiable or vicious points commented upon, although having absolutely no bearing whatever upon the case under consideration—then we cannot avoid the conclusion that the main object of all the report is to sell the paper. It would be impossible to give the public such information regarding the demeanour and tone of witnesses or prisoners as to enable them to form a really just and reliable idea; while it is quite possible and a very frequent practice to be just graphic enough to make the public fancy that they are in a position not only to criticise and speculate, but to dogmatise, and even to protest vehemently against the verdict of a jury and the sentence of a judge, deliberately given after a long and careful inquiry, in which the prisoner had the benefit of counsel learned in every intricacy and subtlety of the law. The practice of giving detailed descriptions of the personal appearance and social habits of criminals, which are now acknowledged features of newspaper reporting, has a tendency to invest the prisoners with something of a meretricious glory, which ought to be condemned by all properly minded people.

If crime has been committed, it is surely injurious to the public morals to write or publish anything calculated to elicit misplaced sympathy, and it is a poor trade to pander to morbid curiosity. If people fairly appreciated not only the wickedness and horror of crime, but its almost invariable meanness, pettiness, and misery, its feverish restlessness, its ever-haunting dread of detection—crime would be robbed of much of its semi-heroic character, and would cease to prove so attractive a bait to those who gloat over its every detail. It is common to speak of 'great' criminals as distinguished from the vulgar herd; but there is never anything great in crime. Graphic pens pandering to vulgar curiosity may produce a passing interest of even absorbing intensity; the crime and the criminal may form a nine days' wonder; but the end comes; and as soon as the convict dress is donned, the erstwhile man is degraded into a mere automaton, a mere numeral, and is utterly dead to the outside world; while if the scaffold should be his destined finale, the only

thing which survives the wretched criminal is his infamy.

Sensational reporting pays, for papers with a reputation for 'Special' descriptions are at a premium whenever there is a *cause célèbre* before the public; but it is eminently prejudicial to public morality. The remedy rests solely with the proprietors, on whom lies also the responsibility of purveying garbage to an unhappily large section of readers; but until public opinion forces upon them the fact that they are deliberately lowering themselves to the level of the vendors of 'Penny Dreadful' literature, sensational reporting of criminal trials is likely to flourish, inoculating the public mind with an unwholesome craving for details which should be banished from the pale of discussion among people with any pretensions to refinement, good taste, or common decency.

THE BONE-CAVE INSCRIPTION.

THE pleasant town of Q—, among its other attractions, possesses a bone-cave. The cave, situated in a little valley close by the sea, had not long been discovered to contain bones before it was invaded by an army of geologists, who dug deep holes in the floor, and unearthed the remains of prehistoric fires, of ancient knives and needles, and of even a man's jaw buried in stalagmite. And every year the fashionable people of Q— made an excursion into the windings of the cavern, under the guidance of gnome-like guides with torches.

Within a certain period of its modern history, the Q— bone-cave, like the sacred caves of India, had a high-priest, an exponent of its mysteries. He did not, however, dwell in its recesses, but in a smart villa overlooking Q— Bay. He was a local celebrity, and the most active member of a committee appointed to examine the cavern. The cavern was his hobby, and as it was of tolerably uniform temperature, there was no time of year when he did not take delight in exploring its mysteries. Every fresh discovery was a joy to Mr Grope; and though a sceptical few laughed at him, and even called some of his flint knives in question, his researches had thrown much light on geology and archaeology. One thing alone was wanting—he had found no dates in the cave. There were dates and inscriptions in caves belonging to other places, and he did not like Q— to be behind them.

Prefacing, for the benefit of the reader, that *stalactite* is the substance that hangs to the roof of caverns, like icicles, and *stalagmite* the substance that has fallen to the floor, a concretion of carbonate of lime—we proceed with the story. One day, as Mr Grope was examining a wall in one of the passages, he thought he detected a weakness in the rock, and working at it with his great hammer he found that it speedily crumbled away. Soon he had made a hole through which he was able to pass, and presently he stood in a small apartment full of large stalagmitic blocks, and with a very moderate amount of water dripping from the roof. As he flashed his lantern about, his keen eye caught sight of artificial markings on the smooth

surface of one of the blocks. His heart leaped within him. Here of a certainty was at last an inscription which, composed of several well-formed letters carved on the block but interrupted by breaks, ran as follows:

F . . l . . . to . . . Nor.
Capit T . . ck
r . . m 20 Br
15 . . 71 k . . to ret

Mr Grope carefully copied the interesting record into his note-book. He looked about for more inscriptions, but this was apparently the only one; however, there might be other unexplored caverns beyond. At present he must devote himself to deciphering these letters. He had a clue in the date 1571, for though there was a break between the '15' and the '71,' it was only caused by a slight inequality in the block.

That evening, in the seclusion of his study, he devoted himself with ardour to the inscription. He did not doubt that it was intended for abbreviated Latin. In the sixteenth century every one who could write knew Latin, and wrote Latin too when he or she wished to be succinct. There were, it is true, only scraps of words on which to proceed, but this circumstance did but occasion a pleasing exercise of Mr Grope's ingenuity. The conquest would have been too easy had the words been given at length. The very uncertainty had in it that excitement which is dear to the hearts of all true antiquaries.

Before he thoroughly set to his task, Mr Grope balanced in his mind whether he should treat the inscription as private or political. He inclined to the political aspect. If it were private, nothing could be made of it, and it was unlikely that a gentleman should carve his personal remarks in the depths of a subterranean cave. No doubt the letters referred to public matters. For a moment Mr Grope could not recollect who reigned in England in 1571; for though he took a great interest in history, he was somewhat oblivious about dates. Soon, however, a vision of Queen Elizabeth in ruff and farthingale rose before him, and then he attacked the first line in good earnest.

F . . l . . . to . . . Nor.

Now it seemed clear as noonday that Nor was the first syllable of a proper name, or at least the name of a place; for Mr Grope remembered that in the sixteenth century it was not the custom to begin every noun with a capital letter, as it was in the eighteenth. Could it refer to Norwich? Norwich was a long way from Q—; but the gentleman in the cave might have been mixed up in a conspiracy which embraced the capture of several towns. Mr Grope took down Mr Froude's *History of England*, and turned over the pages referring to Elizabeth's reign in search of names beginning with Nor. Then a great light broke upon him, and he wondered that he had not remembered his history better. The name of Norfolk occurred several times in connection with what Mr Froude calls the 'Ridolfi Plot,' and the 'Ridolfi Plot' was going on in 1571. The course of his investigation seemed to flow almost too smoothly now. He soon found that the first line ran: 'Fallette tollite Norfolk' (Betray and take Norfolk); whence it was evi-

dent that the man in the cave had played false to all parties, and after engaging in the conspiracy, had lapsed with some fellow-conspirators to betray their chief, the unhappy Duke who preceded Mary of Scotland to the scaffold instead of sharing her throne. 'Betray and take Norfolk!' It was not good Latin certainly, but good enough for an inscription where there were so many breaks, which imagination could fill up with the elegances of language; and the morality was characteristic of the sixteenth century.

The second line of the inscription puzzled Mr Grope more.

Capt T . . ck

The two words composing it were carved in larger letters, and stood by themselves, as if specially important. 'Capt' of course meant *capt*, a head, and might hint at the approaching loss of Norfolk's own; but the 'T . . ck' puzzled Mr Grope sorely, and was evidently another cognomen. It puzzled him so much that he resolved to finish the remainder of the inscription

r . . m 20 Br

first, and see if it threw any light on the subject. The '20' evidently indicated the day of the month; but to what month could 'r . . m' refer? Could it mean *rosarum mensis*—the month of roses? Might not a poetical conspirator thus paraphrase the month of June? Norfolk certainly was not beheaded till June 1573; but it was possible that a fellow-plotter might have decided on betraying him a full year before that date. 'Br' perhaps stood for *brevi*, by way of urging that the deed should be accomplished summarily; and 1571 spoke for itself. The 'k' which followed might be either a small or a capital 'k,' but Mr Grope concluded that it was the initial of another proper name; and he had soon persuaded himself that the sentence 'K . . to ret' ran: 'K— tollite retinetæ,' and was intended as an injunction to take and retain K—. Who or what K— was did not much signify, since there was no doubt about Norfolk.

It was the second line which continued to puzzle Mr Grope. He brooded over it when he went to bed, and could not sleep because of it; but in the small-hours of the morning, that season of daring inspirations, it flashed across him that 'Capt T . . ck' meant neither more nor less than 'Capt Turci,' a Turk's head. 'The man may have written k for c by inadvertence. But why should a Turk's head be written about in the cave near Q—?' It struck Mr Grope that the battle of Lepanto had been fought in 1571, and that the conspirator might be alluding to an invasion of England which was to take place, when the Turk's head should be figuratively cut off. On the following morning, a Dictionary of Dates accompanied the luncheon and toast on Mr Grope's breakfast-table; and he ascertained that the battle of Lepanto had been fought in October, whereas he had decided that the inscription was written in June, and that it had something to do with English refugees and the Turkish fleet. This interpretation certainly gave a wider and more European interest to the writing in the Q— bone-cave. But on further consideration, it seemed to Mr Grope that he would hardly be able to maintain it in printed controversy with the

learned. The Turk's head was pitchforked with so much abruptness among the directions to secure Norfolk and K—, that unless it were supposed to be a watchword among the conspirators, it seemed impossible to dovetail it in.

The antiquary did not go out that morning; he retired to his study and reflected on the difficulties of the Turk's head. At last another light came in upon him, reminding him that there were many inns in the country with the sign of the Saracen's Head, relics of the medieval time when the Saracens were the bugbears of Europe. Very likely there had been inns called the Turk's Head in the sixteenth century, when Europe was always in terror of the Turks, and Mr Grope even fancied that he remembered seeing one with that sign in a village in the east of England. Looked at in this new light, the meaning of the inscription appeared to be: 'Betray and take Norfolk at the "Turk's Head" inn, on the 20th of June 1571, with all possible haste. Take and retain K—.'

Writing this out at full length, Mr Grope read it over with fond pride. He had thoughts of sending a letter on the subject to that scientific paper the *Mirror* at once, but prudence intervened, and he determined that he would first consult Sir H—. T—, the great archaeologist, whom he had helped to house at Q—. It would be as well to say, when he wrote to the *Mirror*, that his friend Sir H— T— agreed with him as to the solution of the mystery; and he accordingly despatched a full account of the matter to the great man. That evening Mr Grope dined out, and could not refrain from imparting his triumph to a select circle of his acquaintances. Mr Grope was generally admitted to be the most intellectual resident at Q—. If a strange fish was caught in the bay, a strange fossil found in a quarry, or a coin dug up in a field, it was always referred to Mr Grope; and there were only one or two people who ever presumed to smile at his conclusions. And now when Mr Grope dilated on the conspirator and the inscription in the newly-found cavern, addressing in his drawing tones the small audience in the drawing-room after dinner—for he had kept the sensation for the benefit of the ladies—no one arose to dispute his explanation. The conspirator's mention of the month of roses was especially attractive and convincing.

But it came to pass that Sir H— T— was not quite convinced. That savant thought it not impossible that the inscription might have something to do with the Ridolfi Plot, as the date was 1571; but as to the rest he differed from Mr Grope, courteously but decidedly. He did not believe in the Latin, and especially in Mr Grope's Latin. He did not believe in the poetic paraphrase of June. He had read a good deal of sixteenth-century correspondence, and had never found a conspirator or any one else who spoke of June as the month of roses. 'Nor' might stand for Norfolk, though such was not Sir H— T—'s opinion. Did Mr Grope think that the inscription was either partly or wholly written in cipher?

To say that Mr Grope was not disappointed, would not be adhering to the truth. He had arranged the matter in his mind, and had foreseen a triumphant career for his inscription among the archaeologists and historians. It seemed impos-

sible that Sir H—— could doubt such inevitable conclusions. The whole thing, as Mr Grope made it out, had fitted together like a Chinese puzzle. Yes, he almost resolved to persevere in his own view. To hold a controversy with Sir H—— T—— might make him nearly as great a man as Sir H—— himself. But he felt in his heart that no one would side with the Turk's Head and the month of roses when Sir H—— was against them. Mr Grope was convinced of the truth of his own interpretation; but he would collect another possible meaning or two, and while pronouncing in favour of the first, submit the others to the learned public. After all, the idea of a cipher opened out a pleasing vista of conjecture. Much conjecture there must of course be, when conspirators would write in disjointed fragments. In the Ridolfi Plot he possessed at least a basis of operations.

It so happened that our antiquarian friend had some acquaintance with a gentleman who was now searching the archives at Simancas for facts to confirm a favourite theory, and who had on one occasion dined with him at Q——; and to him Mr Grope now conceived the happy thought of writing, with a request that he would send him a few of the ciphers used by Philip II. and his correspondents. In due time he received the keys of five or six ciphers, inclosed in a courteous note. The historian himself had sympathy with Mr Grope's efforts in the cause of archaeological science, and had besides, a lively recollection of Mr Grope's '47 port.

And now Mr Grope spent a long morning in his study with the ciphers before him, labouring to make them fit in with the inscription. If cipher really had been used, it seemed probable that English would have been used also. On this assumption, therefore, he proceeded; but the first few keys which he applied unlocked nothing but sheer nonsense. The next especially attracted Mr Grope, inasmuch as the historian told him that it had been used by Mary Queen of Scots. He had reserved it as his last hope; and on further investigation he found that in this cipher, London was termed Norway, and thus written plainly without further disguise. With regard to words which were not proper names, the fifth and sixth letters from the one intended were used alternately. When Mr Grope applied this key to the inscription, he came to the conclusion that it suited it admirably, with the exception of that unfortunate second line, which had puzzled him so much before. He really thought, that as those two words 'Capt T. .ck,' were written in larger letters than the others, and conspicuously placed by themselves, they might be actually put down as a watchword; Why not, after all, 'Capt Thud?' The rest of the inscription he transposed as follows:

h . r r y u Lon
w . . . s 20 g w
1571 p y u wky.

The sequence of letters was not kept up in the second 'yu,' the fifth being used where the sixth ought to be; but as the word was apparently the second person plural, Mr Grope thought it probable that the conspirator would not be particular in his counting where so small a word was concerned. It is convenient in such matters to allow for a

little negligence. In its new aspect Mr Grope saw the inscription thus:

hurry yu Londonwards
with speed twenty great wagons
1571. pay yu weekly.

Mr Grope's head now absolutely ached with his efforts, and he drew his hand down his long gray beard with a feeling of relief as he leaned back in his chair. He nevertheless believed that this last labour was in a measure thrown away, and that the first solution was the right one. Still there was an air of probability about that 'pay yu weekly,' a matter-of-fact air such as he remembered to have observed when reading a printed volume of *Domestic State Papers*; and it would sound well to have tried five ciphers on the inscription and found a possible solution at last. That same day Mr Grope wrote at length to the *Minerva*, describing his discovery of the new cavern and the inscription, and giving his two explanations. For himself, he said, he believed in the Latin version, though he was aware that he had the disadvantage of differing from his learned friend Sir H—— T——. In deference to that gentleman's opinion, he had compared the writing with many ciphers in use in the sixteenth century, and now submitted the result to the attention of the scientific world.

The learned were only too willing to discuss it, and several letters on the subject appeared in the next number of the *Minerva*. One gentleman approved the deciphered version; others proposed solutions of their own, much more absurd than any which Mr Grope had thought of. Next week a letter from Sir H—— T—— himself was printed, in which he expressed his opinion in favour of Mr Grope's second explanation. Mr Grope and his new cavern had become famous. The intellectual world at Q—— itself was greatly impressed with the erudition of his researches. Fashion and science ran into each other a good deal at Q——; and there were some needlessly pretty toilets among the party of friends whom Mr Grope conducted to visit the muddy recesses of his new cavern. There was also a geologist, but he rather despised the inscription as being too recent, and talked chiefly about eyeless fish. The young ladies, knowing little of either the Duke of Norfolk or the eyeless fish, explored the gloomy recesses, and filled them with the sounds of laughter and fun. Only one young lady observed to her companions: 'I shouldn't wonder if Mr Grope is wrong after all.'

A few days later the antiquary met at an evening party, the son of an old inhabitant of Q——, who had been dead for some years, but whom Mr Grope had formerly known. He had known the son too, who was now a Fellow of his college. He was a little blunt, bullet-headed man, and when presently the subject of the Q—— bone-cave came up, he said what he thought without any preface.

'I fancy, Mr Grope, you're wrong about that inscription after all. I suppose you never heard my father speak of old Truck the smuggler?'

'No; I did not,' said Mr Grope, concealing his feelings, which were not of the most comfortable description.

'Old Truck the smuggling captain,' continued the little man, 'used that cave pretty freely.

That was before the geologists had appropriated it, and the barrier was put up. I should not wonder if he sometimes wrote hints to his friends on the walls.'

'But I should not imagine that your father knew any one who lived in 1571,' said Mr. Grope.

'Ah! but is the 1571 a date at all? That's the question,' said the Fellow. 'My father took an interest in that old sinner, and saw something of Truck in his last days in the cottage. The sea has encroached now and washed most of it away. And Truck left him his curiosities—stuffed birds and china, and his old order-books and log-books. I'll look them out. I would lay a wager that he wrote that inscription.'

'It will take very strong evidence to make that believed,' said Mr. Grope. Nevertheless he felt uneasy, and heartily wished that the Fellow had not happened to take the matter up. Meanwhile the Fellow searched for Truck's relics, which were now in the possession of his brother; and the next morning saw him in Mr. Grope's study together with an antique volume, not bound in 'brass and wild boar's hide,' but in dilapidated leather, with a musty-fusty odour half a century old. With a sinking heart, Mr. Grope felt, when first he looked at it, that the historical grandeur of his inscription was about to fall to the ground.

'This was Truck's note-book,' said the Fellow. 'Look here, Mr. Grope.' And there, on the first page, written in a manner which implied that the paper had been rather greasy from the first, were the words 'Capt Truck.'

'And the cave at Q— is mentioned pretty often among his hieroglyphics,' said the restless Fellow, turning over the dirty pages. 'Directions to be left in the Q— cave.' 'I expect there are others there besides the inscription you found. Look here; don't you think this must be the identical one?' And he pointed to some lines which ran obliquely across a page: 'Directions left for Scrooges. Follow to Normandy. Ruin 20, brandy 15, 71 kegs to return.'

Mr. Grope stood stricken to the soul, but not a muscle of his face moved. He silently compared this newest discovery with the copy he had made in his note-book, in the first flush of his hopes.

There was no denying that this was the true solution of the mystery, and that the Billet Plot was nowhere. It was singular that neither he himself, nor Sir H—, nor the other gentlemen who had written on the subject, had thought of the possibility of the man in the cave using straightforward English. At least Mr. Grope erred in good company; but still he felt that he should have to bear most of the ridicule, as the originator of the historical theory, and the investigator who had attacked the smuggler's prosaic inscription with five ciphers used by queens and princes in the sixteenth century. However, he was determined not to shew his chagrin, and even asked the Fellow to dine with him that evening.

Mr. Grope wrote honourably to the *Mitres* to explain the true state of the case. He acknowledged that further research proved both himself and his friend Sir H— to be mistaken on the subject of the writing in the cave at Q—. Then he mentioned Truck and the smugglers, and gave the new interpretation, not without a groan as he wrote 'rum' where formerly he had written '*rosarium mensis*.' He also communicated with Sir H—

on the subject, and Sir H— dryly replied that he wondered the writing should look as if it were three hundred years old, when it was really only sixty or seventy. No more was said about it in the *Mitres*. And as to the Q— people, of course they politely refrained from letting Mr. Grope see that they laughed at him, all except a bluff old personage who exclaimed: 'So your conspirator against Queen Elizabeth turned out to be an old smuggler after all!'

The wounds of Mr. Grope's vanity began to heal in time. They smarted somewhat when the course of winter lectures at the Q— Athenæum was opened, for he had intended to hold forth triumphantly on the bone-cave and the historical inscription. And they bled afresh in the following spring when the annual fashionable pilgrimage to the cave took place. Still the high-priest has not deserted the temple, for Mr. Grope is not easily put down; and he often repairs to his old subterranean haunts and picks up bones and flint implements. But the entrance to the new cavern containing the inscription has been mysteriously filled up again; and the gnome who is the nominal custodian of the cave whispers to a subordinate official of the Q— Athenæum: 'Twas Mr. Grope, he closed it himself, I'll warrant. You see, he couldn't abide it, after that there mistake of 'is that they laughed at so. Smugglers 'iding there; and Mr. Grope, he takes the writin' for summum to do with grand folks that lived three 'undred year ago!'

'Poor Mr. Grope! That was all that came of the inscription in the Q— bone-cave.'

THE 'HEARTS OF OAK' SOCIETY.

ONE of the oldest and perhaps the largest of the Friendly Societies for the benefit of the operative classes, is the 'Hearts of Oak,' which at the present time numbers over eighty thousand members, and has a reserve fund of nearly a quarter of a million. Such extraordinarily large proportions has this society of late years assumed, and so widespread is its influence and usefulness, that we feel sure a short account of its origin and working system will not be without interest, and maybe profit to the reader.

Thirty-five years ago—in 1842—the 'Hearts of Oak Benefit Society' was started at the *Bird-in-Hand Tavern*, Long Acre, London. Of its history for the next twenty years little can be said, save that, although its progress was not anything remarkable, it worked steadily and honestly at the object it had in view, and thus firmly established itself, if it did not produce any extraordinary success. In 1863 the number of members had reached eight thousand, a circumstance which rendered a removal to more commodious premises necessary; and these were purchased freehold in Greek Street, Soho. Notwithstanding, however, this increase of business the amount transacted was not considered by the promoters of the society in satisfactory proportion to the justifiable expectations of such an undertaking, the total number of members having in 1865 only reached ten thousand, and this was attributed to the result of bad administration on the part of the existing management. A change was made in consequence; when the present form of government was inaugurated, which had at once the beneficial effect of

materially increasing the society's business. So perceptible and rapid indeed was the progress of the 'Hearts of Oak' after this event, that in the year 1874 another removal had to be undertaken; and for this purpose, noble premises in Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, W., were bought and adapted at a cost of twenty thousand pounds, and have since served for all the business requirements of the society.

Having said so much for the history of the 'Hearts of Oak,' let us now briefly turn to the main features and working of the system pursued by this huge benefit society.

The predominating principle upon which the system acts seems to be a complete reliance upon actual merits and on them alone. As a consequence, a total absence of all external show and attraction will be found in the administration of the society. It clings to the term 'society' in opposition to 'club' with a most jealous tenacity, although we confess to seeing very little difference between the strictly lexical significance of the two words. Mr Marshall, the able secretary to the society, is of a different opinion, however, and holds that the associations which are respectively bound up with each term differ considerably; a club being generally looked upon as a meeting for social purposes, held as a rule at a public-house. 'It involves,' he goes on to say, 'the glass, the pipe, the song, and other incidents of what is called good-fellowship; and also in many cases regalia, processions, dinners, suppers, and other devices for wasting money and weaning men from their homes and their families.' Whether such 'incidents' are the associations attached alone to a club or not, it is not necessary here to determine, it being sufficient to know that at all events the 'Hearts of Oak' does not rely upon any of these things—although it is common to think that only by such inducements and attractions can the working classes be brought into habits and ways of thrift and saving—and in so doing, the society is a standing contradiction to all such opinions. It has never had to resort to any such extraneous aid. It does not make use of either public-houses or lodges; it indulges in no dinners or suppers, no regalia or processions, no pipe, glass, or song; it employs no agents, canvassers, or collectors; and it spends no money in commission nor yet in advertisements, generally so indispensable an aid to institutions of all kinds. Notwithstanding all this, the 'Hearts of Oak' has of late years admitted more new members than the increase shown by the Odd-fellows, who possess lodges and branches in every part of the civilised world.

As already stated, the society now numbers more than eighty thousand members, and these are formed into divisions of one thousand each; and each of these divisions holds a meeting at the society's house once every month for the transaction of business, &c. Every candidate for membership must earn not less than twenty-two shillings per week, and his age must not be more than thirty-six; while before election he has of course to satisfy the committee upon certain points relating to himself and (if married) his wife, and has finally to be generally approved of by them. There are certain trades and occupations which are considered dangerous and injurious by the society, and persons belonging thereto are therefore held ineligible for membership. Each member has to

pay on entrance a fee of two shillings and sixpence if under thirty-two years of age; and three shillings and sixpence if over that age and under thirty-six, the highest limit for admittance. The periodical contributions amount to about nine shillings and sixpence each member per quarter; this sum having been found, however, rather more than the total average payment for the last six years. The separate items consist of two and twopence a month to the society's stock; and at each quarterly meeting an equal proportion of the claims met by the society during the preceding quarter on account of the various benefits (not including sickness) it has during that period conferred. In fact, each quarter every member is required to clear the books of all demands. After having belonged to the society for twelve calendar months, a member who up to that time has paid all his contributions, can by the payment of an additional fee of two shillings and sixpence, become what is termed a *free member*, such members having the right to participate in all the benefits which the society affords.

The benefits offered by the 'Hearts of Oak' are: (1) Sick-pay at the rate of eighteen shillings a week to *free members* for twenty-six weeks; and should the illness continue beyond that period, half that amount for a further twenty-six weeks; after which the sick member becomes entitled to relief from further contributions, and to a pension payable at a rate in accordance with the length of his membership. *Non-free members* participate in this benefit, but of course on a smaller scale, which, however, is very liberal. (2) Funeral benefits; being the allowance of a sum of ten pounds on the death of a *free member's* wife, and double that amount to the survivors of a *free member* upon his death. Certain proportionate rates are granted on the death of a *non-free member*, half such rates being allowed in the event of such a member's wife dying. (3) Lying-in benefit; which is the grant of a sum of thirty shillings on the confinement of a *free member's* wife; the marriage and birth certificates, duly signed, requiring of course to be produced on such occasions. And (4) Loss by fire; being a compensation allowance of not more than fifteen pounds in the case of any *free member's* tools or implements of trade getting destroyed or damaged by fire. There are besides these some miscellaneous benefits to which *free members* are entitled, such as allowances for imprisonment for debt contracted under circumstances that are in a sense justifiable, or allowances to help towards defraying the cost of a substitute to *free members* who are drawn and liable to serve in the militia.

These benefits seem to anticipate the chief emergencies that may happen in the course of one's life, as well as providing for the expenses always attendant upon death; and the allowances made in respect of them are, it must be admitted, very liberal, and are doubtless the means of causing so many poor persons to save in this simple manner against the occurrence of such untoward incidents.

The success of the 'Hearts of Oak' is largely due, however, to other causes. Principally, we think, it may be attributed to the great economy in its management; as, for instance, it saves a large sum by the fact of its not being what is commonly known as a 'collecting society.' On

the contrary, the members bring or send their money quite of their own accord; the consequence being that, while the managerial expenses of some collecting societies vary from 25 to 70 per cent. on the annual income, the expenses of the 'Hearts of Oak' amount only to $\frac{3}{4}$ or 4 per cent.

Another favourable point in the system pursued by this society is, that all members pay alike. Technically of course this must be considered unscientific, but in the aggregate the system is found to pay; just as the same charge for a telegram whether it be to Aberdeen or to the next street is also unscientific, but practically answers well. The great argument in favour of the system seems to be the fact that it promotes business—and what more is wanted? Our large insurance companies report about one thousand policies as good work for one year; whereas the 'Hearts of Oak' on its system reports over sixteen thousand new members during the same period. On some such system as this it were not impossible, we think, for the whole life-insurance business of the city of London to be done by one well-conducted office; in which case the insured would certainly derive one great benefit—namely, that of having to pay very much less, perhaps only one-half of the usual premium.

Another counterpoise to the disadvantage of charging all members alike is, that a lying-in benefit of thirty shillings—as already shewn—is allowed. To young men this has a great attraction; and the result is that the average age of joining the society is only twenty-seven. So rapid indeed has been the growth of the 'Hearts of Oak,' that an average age of the whole society, which ten years ago was nearly thirty-four years, is now only about thirty-three years.

One other circumstance which we fancy may have something to do with the success of the society is worth mentioning—it is the business-like manner in which the system adopted is carried out. Perfect discipline among the members is maintained, and a strict adherence to the rules that have been made enforced. Every infraction of a rule is promptly visited by the imposition of a fine on the offending member; and so stringent is the society in this respect, that the amount which annually accrues under this head is very large. In the accounts of the 'Hearts of Oak' for 1876 we notice that this item reaches the large sum of L.6949, 13s. 6d.; which not only served to defray the year's expenses of the society (namely, L.5819, 9s. 7d.), but left a balance of L.1130, 3s. 11d. It can hardly be considered as exactly any merit of the society that it is thus able to pay its expenses; yet there stands the fact, whatever we may think of it. It is only fair, however, to state that the greater part of this large amount arises from a fine of ninapence imposed upon members who fail to clear the books by their quarterly night. This is levied more as a sort of interest for a month's longer use of the money; and it is a striking instance of innate want of thrift on the part of the working classes, that so many are willing to pay ninapence for the use of ten shillings for the month, rather than arrange to be prompt in their payments. The revenue derived from this fine alone is about four thousand pounds a year. It is a curious fact too, that of the total number of members on the books at any one time, it is always found that just one-third will not pay at the quarter, and have there-

fore to be fined. In thus deferring their payments, these members are the means of allowing both the monthly and quarterly payments being reserved entirely for the purposes of the benefits already enumerated, and for profit; under which head the surplus now amounts to forty thousand pounds per annum; in point of fact, the cost of management has always been paid for by these miscellaneous receipts. This substantial advantage is probably caused unwittingly on the members' part, but it is not the less felt or beneficial for all that.

Having briefly pointed out the main features and benefits of the 'Hearts of Oak,' it only remains for us to add one word as to the great usefulness of such societies. Notwithstanding the great success of the Post-office savings-banks and such other banks as are intended for the deposit of small sums, it is our belief that they are not so conducive to permanent saving and thrift among the poorer classes as may be supposed. The number of deposits in the postal banks in any one year is no doubt very great; but on the other hand, the number of withdrawals is also great; and from this fact we infer that the larger part of the sums placed there is more for the sake of temporary safety than with any view of permanent saving. Hence then the great usefulness of societies which yield ultimate benefits for present contributions. As already pointed out, the difficulty of persuading the poorer classes to save in this manner is by no means great; and once, therefore, a working man has become a member of such a society, he knows he must pay regularly; which when he becomes accustomed to it, he only feels as a natural duty, like the house-rent he has to pay, or any other such tax. A further advantage of societies too is, that his contributions cannot be regained, except indeed at a considerable loss; but in the savings-banks it is always at his own discretion to draw out his deposits; a discretion often not very wisely used. In this comparison, however, it is by no means our wish to suggest the slightest disparagement of savings-banks, which in their way are most useful to all who are really anxious to lay by. We have only desired to shew more forcibly the benefits of societies like the 'Hearts of Oak,' that thereby those whom it may concern may be induced—if they have not already done so—to become members.

THE DALESFOLK.

BEFORE the spinning-jenny and the steam-engine revolutionised our manner of living, there existed among the hills and dales of the Lake countries a little community which had its own peculiar manners, laws, and customs, and which was something unique in its way, for it seemed to be a kind of republic existing in the midst of a great empire. The people were what are now called peasant proprietors, but in Cumberland and Westmoreland they have always been named 'statesmen.' A few of these ancient land-owners still exist, and their tenure of the land which they possess is not feudal but allodial, in so far as that they acquired their estates at a very remote period, either by establishing themselves on unoccupied lands like the 'settlers' in Australia or America, or by conquering previous possessors. Several of these statesmen possess estates which have descended

uninterruptedly in their families since the time of Richard II., and always as 'customary freeholds,' while one family, the Holmes of Mardale, have inherited their land in unbroken succession since the year 1090, when a certain John Holme came from Norway and settled in the district.

When James II. came to the throne he set up a claim to all those small estates, on the plea that the statesmen were merely tenants of the crown. But his claim was met by the sturdy Dalesfolk in a manner which he little expected. They met to the number of two thousand, at a place called Ratten Heath, and publicly declared that 'they had won their lands by the sword, and by the sword they would keep them.'

Owing to the smallness of the estates, there was not sufficient employment in farm-work at all times for a statesman and his family, and carding, spinning, and weaving formed the employment for the winter months. The men carded, and the women spun the wool yielded by the previous clipping. Nearly every household had its weaving-shop, where one or two looms were kept, and many of the men were able to weave the cloth which served for their own wear and that of their families. The linsey-woolsey dresses worn by the women were homespun, and they also manufactured linen for domestic purposes.

The process of preparing the cloth was a curious one, and deserves mention. After a web of woollen cloth was turned out of the loom, it was taken to the 'beck' or stream and soaked in the water; then it was placed on a flat stone called the 'batting-stone' and well pounded with a wooden mallet. This primitive operation served instead of the elaborate processes through which woollen cloth now passes at the fuller's mill.

The costume of the Dalesmen was rather picturesque, being composed of homespun fleeces of white or black, with occasionally a mixture of the two colours to save the expense of dyeing. This homely material, which is still made in some parts of Scotland and Ireland, has lately become fashionable, and is pronounced to be superior for country wear to the most finished products of our steam-looms. The coats were ornamented with brass buttons, as were also the waistcoats, which were made open in front to shew a frilled shirt-breast. Knee-breeches were the fashion for centuries, and these were worn without braces, which are quite a modern invention. Those used on Sundays or holidays had a knot of ribbon and four or five bright buttons at the knee, and those who could afford it had them made of buckskin. Their stockings, which were of course a conspicuous part of their dress, were also made from their own wool, the colour being either blue or gray. Clogs were their ordinary 'shoon,' but when dressed in holiday costume they had low shoes fastened with buckles, which were often of silver.

At the present day this picturesque costume is nearly obsolete, but some of the old Dalesmen still adhere to the fashion of their youth. About five

or six years ago a few of them happened to meet at Grasmere Fair and stood chatting together for some time without noticing what many other persons were remarking, namely, that all of them were dressed in the old costume. When they did notice it they all agreed that it was a somewhat singular coincidence, and a proper occasion for a friendly glass in honour of 'auld lang syne.' They were the connecting link between the old times and the new, and would probably be the last of the Dalesfolk to wear the costume of the bygone age.

The dress of the Daleswomen was not less primitive than that of the men. They wore homespun linsey-woolsey petticoats and gowns, a blue linen apron completing their attire. The statesman's daughter who first communicated to her native place a knowledge of the glories of printed calico is said to have created a great sensation, and was more than a nine days' wonder. The clogs worn by the women were pointed at the toes and were clasped with brass instead of iron. Their bonnets were made of pasteboard covered with black silk, and in shape resembled a coal-scuttle, with the front projecting about a foot beyond the face of the wearer.

The houses of the Dalesfolk were not of the most comfortable kind, and were similar to those which exist at the present day in many of the southern counties of England. Badly constructed with rough-hewn stones, and joined with clay instead of mortar, they did not always shelter the inmates from the 'could blae;' while it was no uncommon thing for the roofs to be in such a state that when a snow-storm took place in the night, people in bed would often find several inches of snow on their bed-clothes the next morning. The wood used in the construction of the houses was oak; doors, floors, and window-frames being all of that sturdy material. The beams were made of whole trees roughly squared, while the smaller rafters and joists were split. Most of these old buildings had a porch before the outer door, the latter being of massive oak, two planks thick, and fastened together with wooden pegs (for the carpenters in those days used very few nails), which were put in parallel rows about three or four inches apart and left projecting about three-quarters of an inch on the outside. About six hundred of these pegs were used in its construction, and the making of them occupied as much time as it would take to make a dozen doors in our busier times. A degree of sanctity was, however, attached to a door by these simple folk, and certain charms to be used only at the threshold are remembered even now in the Dales.

In dwellings of the usual size there were not more than three rooms on the ground floor, namely the living-apartment, the dairy, and the parlour, the last being generally used as the bedroom of the master and mistress. In some cases there was an out-kitchen, but not in all.

Long after the use of coal and fire-grates became general throughout England these people still continued to burn peat and wood upon the open hearth, and it was not until half the present century had elapsed that, railway communication making coal cheaper, and the increased value of

labour making peat dearer, coal finally triumphed and open fire-places gave place to grates. The old chimneys had no flues, and were very wide at the bottom, gradually contracting towards the top, and in these chimneys hams, legs of beef, flitches of bacon, and whole carcases of mutton were hung up to dry for winter consumption.

The food of the Dalesmen was confined almost wholly to the simple products of their own farms. They consumed a large portion of animal food, and as sheep and cattle were in the best condition for slaughtering in autumn, it was then that the Dalesfolk stocked their wide chimneys with a supply of meat for the winter and spring. Tea, coffee, and wheaten bread were very little known in the Dales; oatcake (Angliob), or 'haver-bread' as it was termed, being used. The people brewed their own beer and drank it at nearly every meal. Such, with milk, butter, and cheese, was the food of these honest folk, and they seemed to have thriven well on it. When tea, coffee, and sugar came into general use, an old Dalesman remarked that he wondered 'what t' wauld wum tew after a bit when fowk nooddays couldn't git their breakfast without hevvin stuff fra baith East and West Indies.'

Until the middle of last century the roads of the two counties were in a wretched state; and instead of wheeled carriages, pack-horses and in some cases sledges were used for conveying things from one place to another. There is an old man now living in Grasmere whose grandmother could remember the present church bells being brought thither by sledges along the old road over the top of White Moss, then the main road between Ambleside and Grasmere. A man and his wife often rode to market together on the same horse, the woman sitting behind on what was called a pillion. But the Dalesfolk were not very particular as to their turn-out, for a piece of turf dried and cut into the proper shape often served them as a saddle. Other saddles were pads of straw; and on market-days, after business was over, such of the farmers as were convivially disposed stayed on at the public-house or inn, holding a 'crack' and drinking till a late hour; and while a spree of this kind was going on, it often happened that the poor hungry horses would break loose and eat up all the straw pads, thus leaving their owners to ride home bareback!

The Dalesfolk were rather superstitious; and there is an old story in the local records about the way in which the first lime was introduced to the district. It was carried on the back of a horse, and as they neared Borrowdale a thunder-storm came on, and the lime in the sack began to smoke. Thinking the sack was on fire, the man in charge went and filled his hat with water from a ditch, and threw it into the sack. As this made things worse, he grew terribly alarmed, and thinking the Evil One had something to do with it, he pitched the lime into the ditch, and leaping on to the horse, galloped home as fast as he could go.

Ploughing was attended with hard labour to those employed, and it required at least three men and three horses to work one plough. The horses were yoked one before another, and it was as much as one man could do to drive them. A second man held the plough-beam down, to prevent the plough from slipping out of the earth; while it was the work of a third to guide the

whole concern, this part of the business requiring the most skill. Sometimes a fourth man was employed with pick and spade to turn up the places missed by the plough. Very little skill or labour was expended in the making of the implement, and it was nothing unusual for a tree growing in the morning to be cut down during the day, and made into a plough, with which a good stroke of work was done before night.

These good people worked much harder than their descendants of the present day. Their hours of labour were much longer, and much of what they did by hand is now done by machinery. Though ignorant and unrefined, they were honest and hospitable, and possessed a great deal of sound shrewd common-sense. In those days many of them followed several handicrafts, for the division of labour was not such as it is now; and a remarkable instance of this diversified ability is to be found in the life of the man who was the parish priest of Wordsworth's poem, *The Excursion*. This worthy man—whose history we have slightly alluded to in an article in this *Journal* on the Lake Country—was the son of a poor statesman, and was the youngest of twelve. At the age of seventeen he became a village schoolmaster; and a little later both minister and schoolmaster. Before and after school-hours he laboured at manual occupation, rising between three and four in the summer, and working in the fields with the scythe or sickle. He ploughed, he planted, tended sheep, or clipped and salved, all for hire; wrote his own sermons, and did his duty at chapel twice on Sundays. In all these labours he excelled. In winter-time he occupied himself in reading, writing his own sermons, spinning, and making his own clothes and those of his family, knitting and mending his own stockings, and making his own shoes, the leather of which was of his own tanning. In his walks he never neglected to gather and bring home the wool from the hedges. He was also the physician and lawyer of his parishioners; drew up their wills, conveyances, bonds, &c., wrote all their letters, and settled their accounts, and often went to market with sheep or wool for the farmers.

He married a respectable maid-servant, who brought him forty pounds; and shortly afterwards he became curate of Seathwaite, where he lived and officiated for sixty-seven years. We are told that when his family wanted cloth, he often took the spinning-wheel into the school-room, where he also kept a cradle—of course of his own making. Not unfrequently the wheel, the cradle, and the scholars all claiming his attention at the same moment, taxed the ingenuity of this wonderful man to keep them all going. To all these attainments Mr Walker—or 'Wonderful Walker,' as he was called—also added a knowledge of fossils and plants, and a 'habit' of observing the stars and winds. In summer he also collected various insects, and by his entertaining descriptions of them amused and instructed his children. After a long and extremely useful, nay we might say heroic life, which extended over nearly the whole of the last century (he having been born in 1709), this remarkable Dalesman died on the 25th of June 1803, in the ninety-third year of his age. In the course of his life he had, besides bringing up and settling in life a family of twelve children,

amassed the sum of two thousand pounds, the result of marvellous industry and self-denial.

The chapel where this celebrated man entered upon his sacred duties was the smallest in the Dales, the poet Wordsworth, Mr Walker's biographer, describing it as scarcely larger than many of the fragments of rock lying near it. Most of these small chapelries were presided over by 'readers,' men who generally exercised the trades of clogger, tailor, and butter-print maker, in order to eke out their small stipend. The livings were not worth more than two or three pounds a year, and the ministers were dependent upon the voluntary contributions of their parishioners. Their stipends, beside the small money-payment mentioned above, comprised 'clothes yearly and whittlegate.' The former meant one suit of clothes, two pairs of shoes, and one pair of clogs; and the latter, two or three weeks' victuals at each house according to the ability of the inhabitants, which was settled among themselves; so that the minister could 'go his course' as regularly as the sun, and complete it annually. Few houses having more than one or two knives, he was obliged to carry his own knife or 'whittle.' He marched from house to house, and as master of the flock, had the elbow-chair at the table-head. Some remarkable scenes were often the result of this droll arrangement, and many good stories are current with reference to it. A story is told in Whythburn of a minister who had but two sermons, which he preached in turn. The walls of the chapel were at that time unplastered, and the sermons were usually placed in a hole in the wall behind the pulpit. On Sunday, before the service began, some wag pushed the sermons so far into the hole that they could not be got out with the hand. When the time for the sermon had arrived, the minister tried in vain to get them out. He then turned to the congregation and said that he could touch them with his forefinger, but couldn't get his thumb in to grasp them. 'But however,' said he, 'I will read you a chapter of Job instead, and that's worth both of them put together!'

There was a curious custom at one time in the Dales of holding market at the church. Meat and all kinds of things were displayed at the church doors, and it often happened that people would make their bargains first and hang their goods over the backs of their seats. Though such practices have long been discontinued, there are still people living who have heard the clerk give out in the churchyard the advertisements of the several sales which were to be held in the neighbourhood. One good custom there was, however, which might be often practised now with advantage in small towns and villages, namely, that of the churchwardens going round the village during divine service and driving all the loungers into church.

The Dalesfolk had their sports too, the chief of which was the one for which Cumberland and Westmoreland have ever been famous, namely wrestling. They were also keen hunters; and until quite a recent period a few couples of hounds were kept in every dale, and when the presence of a fox was betrayed by a missing lamb or a decimated hen-roost, all the dogs and nearly all the men in the parish entered in pursuit of the depredator, and were seldom balked by their victim.

Some songs that were in vogue in the Dales a hundred years ago are still sung, chiefly at fairs by itinerant ballad-mongers. Some of the tunes are very antique, as for instance, *St Dunstan's Hunt's Up*, mentioned by Sir Walter Scott as lost and forgotten, but which is still played on the fiddle every Christmas-eve. The festivals held from time to time in the Dales were such as were very common in all parts of 'Merrie England' when our forefathers worked hard, and money was much scarcer than it is now. That they worked harder on the whole is a thing which admits of two opinions; but one thing is certain, namely, that their work was of a steady, careful, easy-going kind, whilst now it is all bustle and drive, in the endeavour to cram into a few fleeting hours as much as they could do in a whole week. Such as we find the world, however, we must put up with it, content, like them, to keep pegging away, and meeting the storms and buffetings of life with the same courageous spirit which enabled them to add their mite towards the honour, glory, and welfare of our common country.

A SPRING MORNING.

When sparrows in the brightening sun
Chirped blithe of summer half-begun
And sure to prosper—over-hold
With rifled stores of crocus gold—
When lilacs fresh with morning rain
Tapped laughing at my window pane,
And soft with coming warmth and good
Mild breezes shook the leafy wood:

Then, ere the first delight was spent,
Adown the sunny slope I went,
Until the narrowing path across,
Soft shadows flickered on the moss
Of beechen buds that burst their sheath,
And twining tendrils, while beneath,
Where twisted roots made hollows meet,
Grew budding primrose at my feet.

There all the riddles of a life
Which vexes me with aimless strife;
The broken thoughts, that not with pain
Nor patience are will meet again,
Were laid aside, nay, seemed to drop
As, when loud jarring voices stop,
The waves of silence rise, and spread,
And meet in circles overhead.

How life might grow I seemed to guess;
Life knowing no uneasy stress
Of partial increase; strong in growth,
Yet ever perfect, dawning truth
Which swayed each hour that took its flight
An added empyr of light,
That neither cloud nor mist might stay,
Slow brightening to the perfect day.

Though autumn hours will come again,
And leafless branches drip with rain
On sodden moss, yet having seen,
I keep my faith: each spring-tide green—
When drooping life puts off its gloom,
And burned roots bear scented bloom—
With tender prophecy makes sure
My heart to labour and endure.

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STORY OF GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

A PASSING sigh of regret has noted the recent demise, at the good old age of eighty-six, of one of the most remarkable men of our time. Seldom has it been our lot to record in the pages of this *Journal* the story of one whose genius was of so wild and fantastic a character as that of this veteran artist, who won his maiden fame in the days of George III., and has passed away in the latter part of the reign of Queen Victoria.

George Cruikshank, who was of Scotch parentage, was born in London on September 27, 1792. His father was an artist of the caricature order, contemporary with Gillray; and his elder brother Robert was a draughtsman who, though of no great ability, had a strong Cruikshankian manner about him. George began to sketch at a very early age; and at the commencement of the present century he got a living by making etchings for the booksellers. His father had originally intended to train up his son for the stage; but perceiving that his inclinations lay in quite another direction, he allowed him to cultivate those artistic talents which were afterwards to be a source of delight to himself and to the public. In 1805 the lad sketched Lord Nelson's funeral car; and his illustrations of the 'O. P.' riots at Covent Garden Theatre in 1809 attracted considerable attention at the time. Some of his earliest sketches depict characters who were the centre of interest at that period, but whose names have now quite an ancient ring about them.

Before the reign of George III. was over, the young artist had made a conspicuous name as a caricaturist and comic designer. His first designs were in connection with cheap songs and children's books; and after that he furnished political caricatures to the *Scourge* and other satirical publications, besides doing a good deal of work for Mr Hone's books and periodicals during several years. Indeed this famous publisher was the first to perceive the talents of the artist, and to introduce his rather eccentric sketches to the public. It is related of the young Cruikshank that, having

a desire to follow art in the higher department, he endeavoured on one occasion to study at the Academy. The schools at that period were restricted in space and much crowded. On sending up to Fuseli his figure in plaster, the Professor returned the characteristic but discouraging answer: 'He may come, but he will have to fight for a seat.' Cruikshank never repeated his attempt to enter the Academy, although he afterwards became an exhibitor. His pencil was ever enlisted on the side of suffering and against oppression, and it is therefore not surprising to find that the cause of the ill-used Queen Caroline was greatly benefited by its scathing satire. Some special hits were made by the artist on this occasion, for it was a subject on which the public mind was very much excited, and one design which was entitled 'The Queen's Matrimonial Ladder' ran through fifty editions.

In 1830, when the government had determined to suppress the agitation for parliamentary reform, Cruikshank, at the request of his old patron Hone, produced some political illustrations, which are said to have convulsed with laughter the ministry at whom they were directed, and to whom they did incalculable damage. One of these, called 'The Political House that Jack Built,' was particularly good, and within a very short time one hundred thousand copies of it were sold. A few years later George abandoned political caricature and gave himself up to the illustration of works of humour and fancy, to the exposure of passing follies in dress and social manners, and to grave and often tragic moralising on the vices of mankind.

In the year 1831 he illustrated—and indeed originated—the celebrated 'Life in London' of Pierce Egan, a work better known by the title of 'Tom and Jerry.' The book was published in sheets and enjoyed an enormous success, establishing the name of George Cruikshank as the first comic artist of the day. The plates for this work were in *aquatint*, and though not in Cruikshank's best manner, they exhibited that variety of observation and marvellous fullness of

detail for which the designer was always remarkable. The letterpress of the work was, however, written in too free a manner for the moral intention with which the plates were drawn; and offended at the gross use to which his illustrations were applied, the great artist retired from the engagement before the work was completed.

It was related to the writer of this article by Cruikshank himself that, when a very young man, he was one day engaged in hastily sketching a work of rather questionable character. While he was doing it, his mother and another lady entered the room, and he quickly hid the sketch away. The act, however, so disturbed him that he resolved never to allow his pencil to produce any work in the future at which a virtuous woman could not look without a blush. The pure moral tone of all his works attests how well he kept so noble a resolve.

From 1823 down to many years later, George Cruikshank was the most highly esteemed of English book illustrators. Work poured in upon him at a prodigious rate; but being a man of singular energy and tireless industry, he was always equal to the demand. His designs for 'Italian Tales,' 'Grimm's German Stories,' the 'Wild Legend of Peter Schlemihl the Shadowless Man,' 'Baron Munchausen,' and Sir Walter Scott's 'Demonology and Witchcraft,' are amongst his best and highest works. He also illustrated some of Washington Irving's works of fiction, Fielding and Smollett's books, beside Maxwell's graphic history of the 'Irish Rebellion.' It would, however, be impossible, in this brief notice of his life, to mention one title of the works that have emanated from the untrifling pencil of this remarkable man. But the generation which is passing away cannot fail to remember his celebrated 'Mornings at Bow Street,' a series of sketches which depicted and ruthlessly exposed the dark and savage side of London life.

The genius of Charles Dickens, as we formerly had occasion to remark, received invaluable assistance from Cruikshank's pencil, which illustrated the first writings of the young author, and thus paved the way for him to a larger audience than he might otherwise have had. In the first month of 1837 appeared the opening number of 'Bentley's Miscellany,' edited by 'Boz' (Charles Dickens), then in the flush of his 'Pickwick' success, and illustrated by Cruikshank. In the second number of the 'Miscellany,' Dickens commenced 'Oliver Twist,' a work not only illustrated by Cruikshank, but for which the latter it appears had himself supplied, unwittingly, some of the characters.

George used to say that he had drawn the figures of 'Fagin,' 'Bill Sikes and his Dog,' 'Nancy,' the 'Sartful Dodger,' and 'Charley Bates' before 'Oliver Twist' was written; and that Dickens seeing the sketches one day shortly after the commencement of the story, determined to change his plot, and instead of keeping Oliver in the country, resolved to bring him to town, and throw him (with entire innocence) into the company of thieves. 'Fagin' was sketched from a rascally old Jew whom Cruikshank had observed in the neighbourhood of Salmon Hill, and whom he watched and studied for several weeks. The artist had also conceived the terrible scene of 'Fagin in the Condemned Cell' as he sits gnawing his nails, in the curious acci-

dental way we lately narrated to our readers. He had been working at the subject for some days without satisfying himself; when sitting up in bed one morning with his hands on his chin and his fingers in his mouth, he saw his face in the glass, and at once exclaimed: '*That's it! that's the face I want!*'

Nobody who has seen the sketches to 'Oliver Twist' can ever forget them, and two at least of the series are perfect *chef-d'œuvre* of genius, namely the death of Sikes on the roof of the old house at the river-side, and the despair of Fagin in his cell. In fact some of Cruikshank's best work in the delineation of low and depraved life and the squalid picturesqueness of criminal haunts, appeared in the above-named book. His illustrations to Harrison Ainsworth's works were also for the most part charming specimens of what may be appropriately termed the 'Cruikshankian' art. At the same time he sketched the designs for some of the 'Ingoldsby Legends' as they appeared from time to time in the 'Miscellany.' In 1841 he set up on his own account a monthly periodical called the 'Omni-bus,' of which Laman Blanchard was the editor; and subsequently joined Mr Ainsworth in the magazine which that gentleman had started in his own name; the great artist, in a series of splendid plates of the highest conception, illustrating the 'Miser's Daughter' and other works from the pen of the proprietor. For several years Cruikshank had been publishing a 'Comic Almanac,' which was a great favourite with the public, and was always brimming full of fun and prodigal invention. In 1863 a 'Cruikshank Gallery' was opened at Exeter Hall, in which were exhibited a great number of his works, extending over a period of sixty years. The exhibition originated from a desire on the artist's part to shew the public that they were all done by the same hand, and that he was not, in fact, his own grandfather; some people having asserted that the author of his later works was the grandson of the man who had sketched the earliest ones.

He will perhaps be remembered most affectionately by the great industrial portion of the people as the apostle as well as the artist of temperance. Perceiving drunkenness to be the national vice, he depicted its horrors from the studio, and denounced its woes from the platform. It was about the year 1845 that he joined the teetotalers; and in 1847 he brought out a set of plates called 'The Bottle,' a kind of 'Drunkard's Progress,' in eight designs, executed in glyptography with remarkable power and tragic intensity, not unlike some of the works of Hogarth. The success of these extraordinary engravings was enormous. Dramas were founded on the story at the minor theatres, and the several tableaux were reproduced on the stage. He soon published a sequel to 'The Bottle,' and did a great deal of work for the temperance societies; but it was observed that his style suffered somewhat by the contraction of his ideas and sympathies, and his reputation declined amongst the general public in proportion to the increase of his popularity amongst the teetotalers. He remained, however, the staunch friend and ally of the temperance leaders up to the day of his death; and he used to say that for years before he became a total abstainer he was the enemy of drunkenness with his pencil, but that

later experience had taught him that precept without example was of little avail. There is no doubt that, though the good he was able to do by persuading others to whom drink was a positive injury, brought great satisfaction to his mind, it alienated from him to a great extent the friendship, to their loss, of his former companions. But to know his duty was for George Cruikshank to do it, and nobly did he stand by the cause which he had espoused. His advocacy of temperance is also said to have been a great pecuniary loss to him; and the writer of this article remembers having heard him say, a few years since, that he had lost a commission to paint the portrait of a nobleman, because somebody had told the latter that since George Cruikshank had become a teetotaler he had lost all his talent! The hearty laugh which accompanied the recital of the story rings in the writer's ears still.

Perhaps his greatest work in the cause of temperance, as it is certainly his most extraordinary one, is the large oil-painting called 'The Worship of Baachus,' which now hangs in the National Gallery. It represents the various phases of our national drinking system, from the child in its cradle to the man's descent to the grave. There are many hundreds of figures depicted on the canvas, engaged in all the different customs of so-called civilised life; and the sad lesson it reads is well deserving the attention of all who love their country, and would prefer to witness its increased prosperity rather than its decline. Cruikshank had the honour of describing the picture to Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor in 1863; and since then it has been exhibited in all the principal towns and cities of the United Kingdom. Finally, it was presented by the teetotalers to the nation, having been purchased from the artist by means of a subscription. The time spent in the preparation of this work must have been very great, indeed it might well have been the study of an ordinary lifetime. An engraving of the picture was published some time ago, in which all the figures were outlined by the painter and finished by Mr Mottram.

In his own way, George Cruikshank was a philanthropist, and to the end of his life it was his proud boast that he put a stop to hanging for forging bank-notes. The story, as told by himself, is so interesting, that we need not apologise for placing it before our readers. He lived in Salisbury Square, Fleet Street; and on his returning from the Bank of England one morning he was horrified at seeing several persons, two of whom were women, hanging on the gibbet in front of Newgate. On his making inquiries as to the nature of their crime, he was told that they had been put to death for forging *one-pound* Bank of England notes. The fact that a poor woman could be put to death for such a minor offence had such an effect upon him, that he hurried home, determined, if possible, to put a stop to such wholesale destruction of life.

Cruikshank was well acquainted with the habits of the low class of society in London at that time, as it had been necessary for him to study them in the furtherance of his art, and he knew well that it was most likely that the poor women in question were simply the unconscious instruments of the miscreants who forged the notes, and had been induced by them to tender the false money to some

publican or other. In a few minutes after his arrival at his residence he had designed and sketched a 'Bank-note not to be Imitated.' Shortly afterwards, William Hone the publisher called on him, and seeing the sketch lying on the table, he was much struck with it.

'What are you going to do with this, George?' he asked.

'To publish it,' replied the artist.

'Will you let me have it?' inquired Hone.

'Willingly,' said Cruikshank; and making an etching of it there and then, he gave it to Hone, and it was published; the result being, that 'I had the satisfaction of knowing that no man or woman was ever hanged afterwards for passing forged one-pound Bank of England notes.'

In 1863 he published an amusing pamphlet against the belief in ghosts, illustrated by some weird fantastic sketches on wood. But his public appearances now became less frequent. During the later years of his life he gave considerable attention to oil-painting, and he used greatly to regret that he had not received a more artistic education, stating that when he first saw the cartoons of Raphael he felt overpowered by a sort of shame at his own comparative deficiencies. He has, however, left some good specimens of his power in oil in 'Tam o' Shanter,' 'A Runaway Knock,' and 'Disturbing the Congregation'; the last-named having been bought by the late Prince Consort, and afterwards engraved. The design of the Bruce Memorial, which has been so much admired, was also from the pencil of George Cruikshank; and the last contribution from his pen to the public press was a letter on this subject.

His personal appearance was no less remarkable than his works. Rather below middle stature, and thick-set, with a rather sharp Roman nose, piercing eyes, a mouth full of lurking humour, and wild elf-locks flowing about his face, he at once attracted attention as a man of genius, energy, and character. He was always famous for great courage and spirit, which added to his muscular power, made him very capable of holding his own everywhere.

Though accustomed to depict life in its shadier phases, Cruikshank was of a naturally joyous disposition. In social life his humour was inimitable; and his readiness to add to the amusement of his host and his host's guests was only equalled by the unique way in which he played the part of actor, singer, and dancer. The fact of his being a teetotaler in no way interfered with his honest natural merry nature; with old and young alike he was a deserved favourite. Young folks were especially fond of the dear old man. Dining with some other guests at the London house of a friend of the writer's some five-and-twenty years ago, Mr Cruikshank, when asked to favour the company with a song, struck up the comic ditty of *Billy Taylor*, that brisk young fellow, and danced an accompaniment, much to the amusement of the good folks present. 'Not so bad for one of your teetotalers,' quoth the veteran as he returned to his seat.

In his earlier years he ventured alone into the worst dens of criminal London, and since he had grown old he actually captured a burglar in his own house and with his own hands. In many ways he contributed to the public amusement and

the public good; and during the later years of his life he was in receipt of a government pension, for though he helped to make fortunes for others, he made very little money for himself. He was a Volunteer so far back as 1804; and in our own days he commanded a regiment of citizen soldiers of teetotal principles.

There is on view at the Westminster Aquarium at the present time a splendid collection of Cruikshank's works, each of which is a study in itself, while the whole, consisting of about five hundred sketches, forms a unique monument to his skill and genius.

As an artist he will be certain of lasting fame, for he managed his lights and shades with a skill akin to Rembrandt, while his delineation of low life in its every phase was marvellous. His illustrations to fairy and goblin stories were also beyond praise, as they could not be surpassed in strangeness and elfin oddity; and in this respect he was popular with young and old. His sketches must be innumerable, for he was, like all true men of genius, a great worker, and he must have toiled unceasingly through at least seventy years of his long life. He was attacked with bronchitis a few weeks previous to his death, yet with great care he was actually enabled to recover from this disease; but alas! only to succumb to an older complaint from which he had been free for years. He died painlessly, on the evening of the first of February last, at his residence in Hampstead Road, London; and while to comparatively few was given the inestimable privilege of the great artist's friendship, the grief of a nation for his loss attests the universality of his fame.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XV.—THE STOLEN LETTER.

JASPER DENZIL, his arm, bruised and crushed as it had been beneath the weight of the fallen horse, still needing the support of a sling, and his pallid cheek and dim eyes telling that he had not wholly regained his strength, lounged among the cushions of a sofa in what was called the White Room at Carbery. This room, which owed its name to the colour of its panelled walls, sparsely relieved by mouldings of gold and pale blue, overlooked the park and adjoined the billiard-room; and Jasper, with an invalid's caprice, had chosen it for his especial apartment during the period of his compulsory confinement to the house.

Time hung more heavily than ever on the captain's hands since his accident had cut him off from his ordinary habits of life. Of intellectual resources he had few indeed, being one of those men (and they are numerous amongst us) to whom reading is a weariness of spirit, and thinking a laborious mental process, and who undergo tortures of boredom when thrown helpless into that worst of all company—their own. His sisters' affection, his sisters' innocent anxiety to anticipate his wishes and soothe his pain, bored him more than it touched him. He was not of a tender moral fibre, and barely tolerated at best those of his own blood and name. He would very much have preferred as a nurse bluff Jack Prodgers, to Blanche and Lucy. With Prodgers he had topics and interests in common; the minds of the two captains ran nearly in identical grooves; whereas

his sisters did not fathom his nature or partake his tastes. So dreary was the existence to which this once brilliant cavalry officer was now condemned, that he had actually come to look forward with a sort of languid excitement to the professional visits of little Dr Aulus from Pebworth, whose gig, to the great disgust of Mr Lanctetter, the High Tor surgeon, was daily to be seen traversing the carriage-drive of Carbery Chase. With his father, Jasper's dealings were coldly decorous, no fondness and no trust existing on either side. Sir Sykes had announced to Jasper that his debts—of which the baronet, through a chance interview with Mr Wilkins the attorney from London, had been made aware—had been paid in full.

'I must ask you, Jasper,' Sir Sykes had said, 'for two assurances: one to the effect that no more secret liabilities exist to start up at unexpected moments; and the other, that you will never again ride a steeplechase.'

'For my own sake, sir, I'll promise you that last willingly enough,' said Jasper, with a sickly smile. 'I didn't use to mind that kind of thing; but I suppose I am not so young in constitution as I was, and don't come up to time so readily. And as for more snakes in the grass, such as those which that impudent cur Wilkins wheedled me into signing, for his own benefit and that of his worthy allies, I give you my word there's not one. Some fresh tailor or liverman may send a bill in one day. A gentleman can't always be quite sure as to how many new coats and hired broughams may be totted up against him by those harpies at the West End; but that is all. I should have won a hatful of money the other day if anybody but Hanger had been on The Smasher's back, when that savage brute rushed at the wall; but I don't owe any, except a hundred and fifty which Prodgers lent me, and every farthing of which I paid to the bookmakers before the race, in hope of receiving it back with a tidy sum to boot.'

Sir Sykes had forthwith inclosed a cheque for a hundred and fifty pounds to Captain Prodgers, with a very frigid acknowledgment of the accommodation offered to his son.

'I could wish that you had other friends, other pursuits too,' he said coldly to Jasper. 'However, I will not lecture. You are of an age to select your own associates.'

Captain Denzil then, being on terms of chilling civility with his father, and an uncongenial companion for his sisters, yielded himself the more readily to the singular fascination which Ruth Willis could, when she chose, exert. Sir Sykes's ward had a remarkable power of pleasing when it suited her to please. She had at the first conciliated the servants at Carbery—no slight feat, considering the dull weight of stolid prejudice which she had to encounter—and had won the regard of the baronet's two daughters. Then Lucy and Blanche had felt the ardour of their early girlish friendship for the Indian orphan cool perceptibly, perhaps because the latter no longer gave herself the same pains to win their suffrages. And now she laid herself out to be agreeable to Jasper. Nothing could be more natural or befitting than that a young lady, under deep obligations to the master of the house, should shew her gratitude by doing little acts of kindness to her guardian's son when a prisoner; and without any apparent effort or design, Ruth seemed to appropriate the invalid

as her own. She talked to him—she was by far better informed than the average of her sex and age, and had a rare tact which taught her when to speak, and of what—and she read to him. A more fastidious listener than Jasper might have been charmed with that sweet untiring voice, so admirably modulated that it assumed the tone most suited to the subject-matter, be it what it might. The captain, whose host it was, that with the exception of racing calendars and cavalry manuals, he had not opened a book since he left school, cared for nothing but newspapers, and especially newspapers of a sporting turn, and such literature is not generally very inviting to a feminine student; but Miss Willis shewed no symptoms of weariness as she retailed to her hearer the cream of the turf intelligence.

'I don't half like her. There are times when I could almost say, I hate her!' thought Jasper to himself once and again; 'but she's clever, and has something about her which I don't understand, for she never bores a fellow.'

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mowing and rolling, and weeding and pruning, which never seems to be finished in a rich man's pleasure. With the speed of a hunted deer she threaded her way amidst the trees, opened the gate, and skirting the southern angle of the park, fled through the new plantations to her favourite resort, the woods beside the river.

No more peaceful and few prettier spots could easily have been found than that which Ruth now sought, a place where the swift stream, rushing down from its birthplace among the Dartmoor heights to end its short career in the blue sea—of which, between the interlacing boughs, a view could here and there be obtained—brawled among the red rocks that half choked up the deep and narrow ravine. A welcome coolness seemed to arise from where the spray of the pellucid water was sprinkled over boulders worn smooth by time; and clefts where the delicate lady-fern and many another dainty frond grew thickly. But Ruth Willis for once was blind to the beauty of the scene, deaf to the silvery music of the stream among the pebbles or to the carol of the birds. With dilated eyes and lips compressed, but with trembling fingers, she drew forth the stolen letter, and beneath the shadow of the overhanging boughs, eagerly, almost fiercely, read and re-read the words that it contained.

FIRES IN AMERICA.

THE exceeding dryness of the atmosphere in the United States produces such an inflammability in buildings, that when a fire breaks out it proceeds with surprising velocity. Owing to this circumstance Americans have organised the most perfect system in the world of extinguishing fires, though all their efforts are often in vain. A stranger in New York or Boston would be astonished at the immense uproar caused by an outbreak of fire. Bells are rung, gongs sounded, and steam fire-engines rush along the streets regardless of everything. The unaccustomed stranger is apt to make a run of it when he sees the engines coming; the American simply steps on to the 'side-walk' or into a 'store' for a moment. It is provided by the city government that the officers and men, with their teams and apparatus, shall have the right of way while going to a fire, through any street, lane, or alley, &c.; and most unreservedly do the said officers and men make use of this permission. If any old woman's stall is at the corner of a street round which the steamers must go, there is no help for it; over it goes. If a buggy is left standing at a corner, the owner must not be surprised if but three wheels are left on it when he returns. Accidents of this latter kind, however, are rare; people recognise and yield willingly the right of way; and the quicker the engines go to a fire, the better pleased everybody is. It is quite a point of rivalry among the firemen who shall get the first water on a fire, and is mentioned always in the report of the engineer.

This is how it looks from the outside; but the greater part of those who see the engines go to a fire have no idea of the inner working of the system. All they know is that when there is a fire the engines go and put it out. We shall

therefore now proceed to shew, first, the means for communicating alarms of fire; and second, the means for extinguishing fires when discovered.

There are in Boston (Mass.), which we may take as an example of a well-protected city, about two hundred and thirty-five alarm-boxes, which are small iron boxes placed at street corners, on public buildings, and in any convenient and necessary locality. Each box is connected by two wires with the head office at the City Hall, and has its number painted in red, and a notice stating where the key is kept, which is generally the nearest house. The authorities usually confide the key to some person whose premises are open all night, such as the proprietor of an hotel, an apothecary, or a doctor. When the box is opened, nothing is seen but a small hook at the top, the interior being concealed by another iron lid. Under this second lid is a steel cylinder with pieces of ebony let into its circumference to correspond with the number of the box. This cylinder is connected with one of the telegraph wires; and a steel spring which presses against it, with the other. When the hook is pulled down a clock-work arrangement causes the cylinder to revolve four times; the steel spring consequently passes over the entire surface of the cylinder four times, and contact is broken at the points where the spring touches only the non-conducting ebony. For instance, if the circumference of the cylinder in box 125 could be unrolled, it would present an appearance something like this: I II IIII. Let us now follow the wires to the top of the City Hall, where, night and day, sits an operator watching the recording instrument. Here in a small room are numerous electrical instruments of all sorts, gongs, switches, keys, levers, and wires. In an attic overhead are the batteries. As soon as a box is opened and 'pulled' a bell strikes, and a recording instrument in front turns out a slip of paper, on which is printed the box number; thus

would mean box 125. It prints this four times—the number of revolutions made by the cylinder in the box—to avoid any error.

On the other side of the operator are three clock faces bearing numerals from one to nine, and a pointer. The one to the right is for the units, the middle one for the tens, the one to the left for the hundreds. Under them is a lever working horizontally. Immediately the operator receives the box number, he sets these pointers to correspond with it—namely, the left one he puts at 1, the middle at 2, the right one at 5—thus making 125—and then moves the lever underneath.

Now let us see what is the result of this manoeuvring. Wires connect these machines with various church bells and gongs in all parts of the city, which ring out the alarm as the operator moves the lever. There are thirty-eight such bells in Boston. When there is a church bell in the neighbourhood, the fire department affixes an electrical hammer to it; if, however, there is no public bell in the right place, a large gong is erected. The machine at City Hall is automatic when once started, and causes the bells to sound the alarm three times as follows. For box 125 they would strike once; then a pause and strike twice; another pause and strike five times; then a much longer pause and repeat twice. For box 218 they strike

2—1—3, always sounding the number three times with intervals between. So quickly is all this managed that in half a minute after a person opens and 'pulls' a box he hears the bells begin to respond.

In case that the engines which go on the first alarm are not sufficiently numerous to extinguish the fire, a second alarm is given by the operator striking ten blows on the bells, which brings several more engines. If the fire is very serious, a third alarm brings still more engines with hose and ladder companies. This is given by striking twelve blows twice. If the conflagration is becoming very serious indeed, the entire fire department is summoned by striking twelve blows three times. This, of course, very rarely happens. Indeed so efficient are the men and apparatus, that even a second alarm is quite unusual. The second and third alarms are communicated to the City Hall operator by simply 'pulling' the same box a second and third time; or if the pulling apparatus should have been destroyed at an early stage of the fire, by transmitting a request by a Morse telegraph key, which is placed in every box for the use of the employees when out testing the circuits. Every one knows the number of the box situated near to his residence or place of business; so, if awakened by the bells in the night, he simply counts the box number, and if it is not near him, turns over and goes to sleep again reassured; whilst if it chance to be his number, he is at once ready to render any assistance.

The fire telegraph is also made use of by the city authorities for calling out the police or the military in case of a disturbance, and also for informing the parents who send their children to the public schools when there is to be no class, on account of bad weather or other reasons. Each of these circumstances has its special number. There is also a gong placed in every police station, which is struck directly from the boxes, and it frequently happens that the police have a flaming building barricaded by a rope, before the engines arrive.

Next, the means for extinguishing fires when discovered. In the city of Boston there are twenty-nine steam fire-engines in actual service, and seven held in reserve; eight chemical engines, throwing water impregnated with soda and sulphuric acid, which also serves as the motive-power; one steam self-propelling engine; one fire-boat to defend the water-front of the city; nearly forty hose carriages, about seventy thousand feet of hose, and twelve hook and ladder companies; besides other apparatus of various kinds, such as hand-engines, coal-wagons, sleighs for carrying the hose in winter, and several aerial ladders. The engines weigh from seven to nine thousand pounds, and cost about a thousand pounds each.

One of the most interesting features in the American fire-system is the extreme ingenuity that is exercised to insure the speedy arrival of the apparatus at a fire. As has been said, in less than a minute after the alarm-box has been pulled the bells are ringing out the alarm all over the city; and—incredible as it may seem—sometimes in ten seconds after the alarm is rung, the engines have left their stations with steam up and every one prepared for work! Perhaps the best way to give a general idea of how this wonderful celerity

is attained is to describe the interior arrangements of an engine-house.

Usually an engine and a hose-carriage are kept in one house. This is a two-story building with a small tower or look-out. In the cellar are kept the steam-heaters and coal; on the first floor in front are the engine and hose-carriage, at the back the stables; on the second floor the sleeping-room of the men, their smoking and reading room, and a small tool-shop. There is a sort of wooden tunnel running up by the side of the stairs from the cellar to the top of the house, in which are hung the lengths of spare hose. In the front of the building is a large gateway, kept closed, for the entrance and exit of the engine. The engine stands facing the door, and by the side of it the hose-carriage. The firemen's helmets and coats are hung on these; and in the engine the materials for getting up the fire are laid at the bottom; and close by is a sort of tow-torch soaked in oil, which is lighted and thrown on the fire by the engine-man when they start. So inflammable is the material laid in the engine-furnace that the fire is lighted instantaneously. Coming up through the floor, and connecting with two pipes at the rear of the engine, are two tubes from the steam-heater mentioned above. This is simply a small boiler by which the boiler of the fire-engine is kept filled night and day with hot water, so that steam is up immediately after the fire is lighted. By the side of the engine is a large gong, on which the alarm is sounded by the same current that causes the strokes on the bells outside. Under this is a lever holding back a powerful spring, which, when released, opens the stable-doors without any attention from the fireman!

There are three horses—two for the engine, and one for the hose-carriage. They are kept in small stalls, and face the door of the house, with the door of the stall just in front of them, so that when the door is opened, the horses, on stepping out, stand by the side of the engine in readiness to be harnessed. And not only this, but the horses, without exception, are so well trained, that the instant the door is opened they run out and stand by the side of the engine-pole. They are always completely harnessed, and their harness is so constructed that in order to attach them to the engine only the joining of a few snap-hooks is necessary.

One fireman is always on patrol on the floor, whose duty it is to count and register the alarm; another is on patrol in the neighbourhood. They sleep with everything on but their coat and boots, and each has a distinct place assigned to him, which he takes on the striking of an alarm. So the gong strikes, the stable-doors open, the horses rush out, the men tumble down-stairs from their rooms above, the horses are harnessed; and if the alarm calls for them, the doors are thrown open, and they are gone, occasionally, as was said, in ten or twelve seconds from the striking of the alarm.

The city of Boston is divided into ten fire districts, and each district placed under the charge of an assistant-engineer. Usually about five or six engines, with their accompanying hose-carriages, two hook and ladder companies, a coal-wagon, and one of the wagons of the protective brigade—carrying tarpaulins and rubber blankets, to protect property from injury by water, supported by the insurance companies—go to every fire. The entire force of the Fire department in 1876 was

six hundred and sixty-seven men, controlled by three fire commissioners, one nominated by the mayor, and confirmed by the city council every year.

Such are the means possessed by a city of rather more than four hundred thousand inhabitants for protection against fire; and with such a splendid system and such a force of men and machines, it is difficult to understand how a fire could attain such awful proportions as that of 1872, when the loss amounted to four millions sterling.

Boston always took great pride and felt much confidence in her granite-fronted places of business, but her recent fire has relieved her of that misplaced confidence. The blocks of granite crumbled away, cracked and fell apart, and even exploded. Of course this was an exceptionally great heat, but one sees fewer warehouses fronted with granite now than before the fire.

Even during so terrible a calamity as this fire the characteristic wit of the American did not desert him. No sooner were the flames extinguished in the burnt district, than the occupiers of the premises put up notices on their lots stating their present residences and future plans. Usually, in the larger cities of the United States, a value is put upon time of which we have no conception in England. When a house is burnt down in London or Edinburgh, half a year may elapse before arrangements are made to build it up again. On the morning after a fire in New York, we were amused in observing that workmen were already engaged in preparations for a new building. Owing to this species of energy in the American people, the two half-destroyed cities of Boston and Chicago are built up again, handsomer and stronger than ever. And still the work of improving the fire department goes on. There are in the newspapers almost daily accounts of the trial of new engines, improved ladders, longer fire-escapes, and surer fire-extinguishing compounds, and nothing is spared in checking the tyranny of what has been so aptly termed a 'good servant but bad master.'

MONSIEUR HOULOT.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—YESTERDAY—BONDAGE.

I WAS sitting one day looking disconsolately out of window at a landscape almost blotted out by rain and mist, a landscape almost hatefully familiar to me. My mind was as cheerless as the prospect, as blank as the sheet of paper stretched before me to receive its impressions. I looked on that sheet of paper with disgust, with loathing. There was no idea in my head, and I felt that anything I might attempt to write would turn out meaningless verbiage. But my invisible task-masters were behind me—I heard the crack of their many-thonged whips—I saw Messrs Butcher and Baker sitting joyfully on the car which was destined to crush me if I once slackened the rope.

Yes, I was a writer; neither a successful one nor the reverse. I made a living by it, but it was an irregular living. Sometimes I was comparatively rich, at others I was superlatively poor. At the date of which I write I was decidedly in the latter condition. In purse and in health I was at the lowest of low-water; one reacted on

the other; my poverty increased my physical weakness, which in its turn prevented any effective effort to fill the exchequer. Everything I wrote somehow missed fire. A rest and a change might have set me up. I had no means of taking either. Nor was I the only sufferer in the house. My wife was ill and depressed; the children were out of health. Everything was out of gear.

Under these doleful conditions I was sitting in a sort of comatose state, brooding over all the uncomfortable possibilities of existence or non-existence—without a friend to take counsel with, or even an acquaintance who might help to move the stagnant waters of life—when I was aroused by the unwonted sound of wheels. A fly drove up to the gate, horse and driver shivering and dripping with wet. The man jumped down and rang the bell. The servant brought up a card: 'Mrs Collingwood Dawson.'

I knew the name well enough. Dawson was a successful writer of fiction, a man whose novels were in demand at all the circulating libraries. But what could his better-half want with me? Time would shew. The lady entered.

Mrs Collingwood Dawson was a pleasant-looking woman of uncertain age, not much over thirty probably, and certainly under forty, with dark luminous eyes and an expressive face.

'It is rather bold of me,' she said, 'to come here and take you by storm, without introduction or anything. I can only plead the fellowship of the craft.'

I replied in an embarrassed way with some meaningless commonplace; and after a few preliminary civilities, she came to the real purpose of her visit.

'My husband is,' she said, 'a very ill-used man. Everybody is worrying him to write this and that and the other. If he had a dozen pairs of hands he could keep them going. Unfortunately, he is a sad invalid, and is really incapable of undertaking more than the little he has in hand.'

I expressed a decent grief at the ill-health of Mr Collingwood Dawson.

'I have long been urging him,' she went on, 'to take a partner, a coadjutor, a *collaborateur*, some one who will relieve him from the laborious part of the business, who will work in his style and on his ideas, and whose work should in effect be his, and appear under his name.'

'You will have difficulty,' said I, 'in finding a competent person who would be willing to sacrifice his literary identity.'

'Yes; there is a difficulty certainly; but I have taken the liberty of hoping that you would help us to obviate it. You are yet young comparatively, and have ample time hereafter to gather a crop of bytes on your own account.'

'What induced you, madam, to think of me in the matter?'

'Simply a study of what you have written, the style of which seemed suitable to our purpose. If I am offending you, say so, and I will apologise, and go no further.'

I replied that I was willing to hear her offer; that I had no opinion of literary partnerships, but that my means would not allow me to reject point-blank any advantageous proposal.

'There is nothing derogatory at all, you will acknowledge, in working on other people's lines; the greatest authors have done it.'

'Oh, if I can do it honestly, I shall have no scruples on any other score.'

'Is there any difference between working for us and say for a magazine which publishes your work anonymously? Or in writing under a *nom de plume*. If there is any deceit in the matter, it rests with us, not with you. But if it be a deceit, then all the old masters were cheats, when they sold as their own, pictures which were in parts done by their scholars, or sculptors who sell as their work, statues of which all the rough work has been done by pupils or workmen. No, indeed; it is your own pride that stands in the way. And pride you know is a sin, and ought to be repented of.'

'Well,' I said, 'let me hear the terms.'

The terms were liberal enough. A certain sum per sheet at a higher rate than I could earn elsewhere, and with the certainty of a market for all I wrote, which at that time I did not possess. But the bait which finally took me was the offer of an immediate cheque for fifty pounds on account and to bind the transaction.

I took counsel of my wife.

'Can you hesitate?' she said. 'Here we hardly know where to look for to-morrow's food, and you are offered a certain income and fifty pounds as earnest-money.'

I closed with the offer and accepted the retaining fee; and I felt as Mr Faustus might have done when he sold his soul to the Evil One.

Mrs Collingwood Dawson seemed pleased at my compliance, and sketched out to me the part she wished me to take. We were to manufacture novels solely—about three a year. The plot was to be drawn out for me with indications of the points to be worked out. I was to fill in dialogue and description. The 'author' was to be at liberty to add, cut out, amend, and put in finishing touches.

'I shall give you,' she said, 'a packet which I have left in the fly, containing the various works of my husband. Read them over critically, and adapt your style to his. I know you are a skillful workman, and will have no difficulty in the matter.'

Business over, my employer joined our family dinner. She was bright and cheerful, and her gaiety was infectious. My wife was charmed with her; the children could not make enough of her. Her presence had all the effect upon me of sparkling wine. When she was gone, I sat down to read Mr Dawson's works with as little appetite for their perusal as a goose has for figs. But I was surprised to find that though uneven in quality and often carelessly written, there were abundant traces of a vivid imagination, and an intimate knowledge of the workings of the human heart in morbid and unhealthy developments. These qualities, I may say, appeared only by fits and starts, and were overlaid by a good deal of very commonplace work. The strong point of his fiction, and that which gained, no doubt, the approval of the public, was the plot. His plots were always ingenious and well combined, and kept the interest going to the very fall of the curtain.

Time passed on. I got fairly to work on my new business. I had no fault to find with my employers, and they on their part seemed well satisfied with my services. I had as much work as

I could manage; but I found it much easier than of old, inasmuch as I had definite lines to work upon and a distinct object in view. Then the payment was regular, and in virtue of that, our household assumed an aspect of comfort and tranquillity to which it had long been a stranger. As it was no longer necessary for me to live within reach of London, I determined to carry out a plan that had been in my head for some time, and settle for a while in some quiet place in Normandy, where one could have good air, repose, and tranquillity, without the appalling dullness that mingles over an English country town.

All this time I had never seen Mr Collingwood Dawson, and the only address I knew was at his chambers in the Temple; but all business matters were arranged with a Mr Smith, who, I understood, was his agent. My removal involved only a trifling extra cost in postage, and I had work on hand that would keep me going for several months.

We settled in a pleasant picturesque little town on the banks of the Seine, and after giving myself a few weeks' holiday, to make acquaintance with the neighbourhood, I began to plod on steadily at my task.

I had just despatched a parcel of manuscript, and was strolling homewards from the post-office along the quay, when I stopped to watch some people fishing from the steps that lead down to the water-side. The tide was low, the evening tranquil. The setting sun was blinking over the edge of the wood-crowned heights behind; but all this side of the view was in shadow, while the aspens and poplars on the further bank were glowing in golden light. A little brook that escapes into the river hereabouts through a conduit of stone was splashing and bubbling merrily. In the eddy formed by the brook and the big river were swimming the light floats of the fishermen, every now and then pulled down, more often by some drowning weed or twig, but sometimes by a fish, whose eager darts from side to side, and struggles as it was hauled in by main force, afforded great amusement and excitement to some half-dozen boys.

A more than commonly vigorous pluck at one of the floats, and a strenuous tug at the line belonging to it, which made the rod curve and wave under its strain, showed that a big fish had been hooked. The sensation among the spectators was great. It is always an awkward matter to land a fish of any size when the river-bank is perpendicular and there is no landing-net. Our friends here, however, were not disposed to create unnecessary difficulties. A companion of the successful fisherman seized the line and began to haul it in hand over hand. It is a capital way this if everything holds and the fish is hooked beyond possibility of release. In this case, however, although the line was pulled in vigorously, all of a sudden the resistance ceased and the hook came naked home. The baffled fisherman bowed and smiled politely at his friend. It was a little *contre-temps* inseparable from the amusement of fishing.

'Clumsy!' growled a voice close to my elbow in good English. I turned round quite startled, for there were no English residents in the town, and the accents of my native tongue were becoming unfamiliar. A man stood by my side of somewhat

strange appearance. He was short and thick-set, and had a massive strongly marked face, with bushy overhanging eyebrows, a heavy gray moustache, and stubbly beard of only a few weeks' growth. His arms were folded, the left one over the other; but as he changed his position, I saw that he had lost his right hand, and that its place was supplied with an iron hook. He was dressed in a blouse made of some kind of coarse blanket-stuff of a huge cheque pattern, trousers of dirty-white flannel, stuffed into boots that came half-way up his calf. A Turkey-red handkerchief was twisted carelessly round his throat, there being no sign of any shirt beneath; and a bonnet of the Clengarry shape was cocked rather fiercely on his head. In his hand he held a packet of whity-brown paper, made up as it seemed for transmission by post. I could not help seeing that the packet was addressed 'London' in a bold rough hand.

He seemed to wince at the look full of curiosity that I gave him. His face, which had been lighted up with interest in watching the progress of the fishing, now turned dull and dark. He went off at a short shambling trot in the direction of the post-office, and I saw no more of him just then.

I was not long, however, in finding out something about him. His name it seemed was Houlot, and although eccentric, he was inoffensive, and was on the whole rather respected by the townspeople. He was a *savant*—a character, in their eyes, that excused a good deal of moroseness and roughness of manner. He had resided in the neighbourhood for some years, and occupied a single room in a house upon the hill overlooking the town. Here he lived—hermit-fashion—keeping no domestic, buying his own provisions in the market and cooking them himself. His kitchen, however, I was given to understand, was the least important part of his establishment; and the juice of the grape or of the apple, or of the potato haply, distilled into strong waters, formed the chief of his diet. For many weeks at a time he would scarcely stir from his room, only coming out when his bottle of brandy was empty, or on market-days to buy provisions. After this period of seclusion, he would be seen walking about the country with a pipe in his mouth, a thick oaken stick under his arm, and a book in his solitary hand, still morose and unsocial. There was yet a third stage, during which he would haunt the cafés and wine-shops, drinking a good deal, and chatting away with all comers. At these times he was apt to get quarrelsome, and he was known in consequence to be on bad terms with the inspector of police.

I daresay that if I had chosen to apply to the last-named functionary, I should have got still more ample information; but there was nothing to justify me in pushing inquiry any further. It was generally thought that Houlot was English in origin; but his French was not distinguishable as that of a foreigner, and he spoke German as well as he did English.

A week or two afterwards I met Monsieur Houlot walking on the heights overlooking the Seine, with his pipe and stick, and with his nose in a tattered volume. I raised my hat in passing; but he turned his head away with a scowl, and did not return my salute. Decidedly, I said to myself, he is English.

One morning the postman brought me a registered letter containing a remittance from England, and placed before me his book to receive my signature. When I had signed, he handed me a letter; but it was not for me, it was for M. Houlot; and yet, curiously enough, the address was in the handwriting of Mr Smith, the business agent of Collingwood Dawson, from whom I was expecting a remittance.

'Ah, I have given you the wrong letter,' said the postman. 'They are both just alike, and I have made a mistake; pardon, Monsieur;' and he handed me a similar letter addressed to myself.

I noticed that from this date Houlot seemed to assume his third stage of habits—that in which he haunted the cafés and wine-shops. Every one agreed that he was much less inaccessible at such times, and could even make casual acquaintance with strangers. I had a great desire to know more about him, and took a little pains to throw myself in his way. I ascertained that he usually spent his afternoons in one particular café—the *Café Cujus*—thus called from the name of its proprietor; and I made a point of taking coffee there every day at the hour at which he was usually to be met with. But I did not advance my purpose by that. He would bury his head in the *Journal de Rouen*, turn his back persistently upon me, and leave the café at the earliest possible moment.

'You will come and visit us this evening?' said Mademoiselle Cujus graciously to me one day, as I paid my score at the counter of the elegant little platform whence she dispensed her various tinctures. 'We shall have a very genteel concert to-night.'

Mademoiselle is a charming little Frenchwoman, with a piquant retroussé nose, a full and softly rounded chin, and dark eyes with a veiled fire about them, most attractive. She wears the prettiest little boots in the world, and is always charmingly dressed. It is difficult to refuse Mademoiselle Cujus anything, and I undertook to be present at the concert. Admission was free, and thus I did not commit myself to any great outlay.

When I entered the café that evening, I found it well filled with a miscellaneous but respectable company. Everybody is talking, coffee-cups and glasses are clinking, dominoes are rattling. At one end of the room, on an extemporised platform, formed of a few rough boards, the prima-donna, a rather bony lady in a very low dress, stands with a roll of music in her hand, and surveys the company in a somewhat dissatisfied way. She has cleared her throat once or twice, and the pianist bangs out an opening chord or two. Her voice is a little husky—perhaps with the singing of anthems; but she has plenty of confidence and 'go' about her, and the wit to please her audience.

When the rattle of applause that greeted the end of the lady's song had ceased, there followed a comic man dressed as a peasant, carrying a tobacco-pipe, which he was always trying, though ineffectually, to light with a match from his trousers-pocket. He counterfeits the Norman peasant in a state of semi-intoxication excellently well, and his song is much applauded and called for again.

'Yah!' growled a voice behind me in an angry tone; and looking round I saw M. Houlot standing by the doorway, his thick stick under

his arm. He seemed to be a little obscure in his faculties, and to have resented the last performance as a personal insult to himself. His brows were knitted, and his eyes gleamed angrily whilst he grasped the thin end of his stick in a menacing way. Mademoiselle Cujus saw him at the same moment as myself, and descended quickly from her Olympus to appease him, laying her hand upon his arm as if to beg him to retire. He shook it roughly off; and Mademoiselle looked imploringly at me, as being the only one of the company who had noticed this little scene. At the sight of being in distress I at once came forward. I took Houlot kindly but firmly by the arm, and led him out into the kitchen at the back, where, among the many brightly shining vessels of tin and copper, we endeavoured to pacify him and explain matters.

No one could possibly withstand the winning ways of Miss Cujus. Houlot was appeased, and went quietly out into the street. I had had enough of the concert, and followed him. He lurched a little in his gait, and every now and then stopped and looked fiercely round at the stars overhead, as if he objected to their winking at him in the manner they did. I accosted him once more, and in English, saying that I understood that he spoke the language perfectly, and would he favour me with his company for half an hour. He made no reply at first, but wrinkled his brows and puckered his lips.

'Come along!' he said at last with a suddenness that startled me. 'Let me have a talk with you, then.'

I occupied a furnished house, with a little pavilion in the garden looking out on the river, which I used as my writing and smoking room; and to this pavilion I took my friend and called for lights and cognac. He seemed restless and disturbed at the idea of being my guest. He would not sit down, but as soon as he had swallowed a glass of brandy he grasped his stick once more to take his departure.

'If you would like any English books,' I said, 'I have some magazines and so on.'

He shook his head. 'I never read English; I have read none for ten years,' he said. 'I like to get things at first-hand; so that if I want to know anything, I go to the Germans; if I want to feel anything, to the French. But what have you here?' taking up a book. It was a volume of Dawson's last novel, which had been sent over to me.

'Hum!' he cried. 'Is this a good author?'

'A popular one,' I replied, modestly remembering the share I had, if not in his fame, at least in his fortunes.

'I'll take this, if you'll let me have it,' he said.

'Take the three volumes.'

'No; I'll only take one. I don't suppose I shall get through the first chapter.'

Next day, however, he came back to borrow the second volume, and the day after the third. I felt a little flattered that a work in which I had taken so good a share had the power to captivate such a dour and sullen soul.

'What do you think of it?' I said, when he brought back the last volume. He was standing leaning against the doorway with his stick under his arm. He would never sit down; he seemed to have made a vow against it.

'Think of it?' he cried. 'Why, it is my own—my own story!'

'Yours!' I said astonished. 'How do you make that out?'

'It is mine! the framework, the skeleton of it. Some fool has been at work upon it and taken out all the beauties of it! The burning fiery dialogue, the magnificent glowing descriptions, all are gone, and in their stead some ass has filled it all up with pulp!'

This was pleasant for me to hear. My blood boiled with indignation, but I was obliged to smother my anger and put on a sickly smile. 'You must be mistaken,' I said. 'How could he possibly have got hold of your story?'

'How? He must have got it from a man named Smith, to whom I sent it. Write? Yes, I have written ever since I was breeched! It is a disease with me; I can't help it. Romances, novels, all that trash!'

'And you send what you write to London?'

Houlot nodded. But he seemed all at once to have repented of his freedom of speech, and took refuge in his usual taciturnity. Then once more hugging his stick, he started off at his usual shambling trot.

THE CAT—ANCIENT AND MODERN.

CROWN and treacherous, a lover of the night and darkness, the cat, with its distrustful gaze and marked attachment to localities, was very naturally the animal selected, in the middle ages of superstition and witchcraft, to represent the familiar companion, in which was embodied the evil spirit supposed to attend all those who practised the black art in former times. Long before this time, however, as some people are probably aware, the cat was one of the most highly favoured animals living; petted, pampered, carefully protected, and actually worshipped by the then most civilised people in the world, the ancient Egyptians. How this reverence came to be paid to the cat in particular by this extraordinary people it is quite impossible to determine; but by some it is supposed to have originated from the benefits conferred on mankind by its destruction of vermin and reptiles; at anyrate, if the Egyptian cats were as useful as they are represented to have been, the care taken of them is easily accounted for. Though it seems somewhat difficult to understand how the sportsmen of the Nile trained their cats not only to hunt game but to retrieve it from the water, the hunting scenes depicted on walls at Thebes and on a stone now in the British Museum, afford proof of the Egyptian cat's services in this respect. In one of these representations Fassi is depicted in the act of seizing a bird that has been brought down by the marksman in the boat; while in the other scene, as the sport has not begun, the cats are seen in the boat ready for their work. Thus it appears from these ancient illustrations of field and other sports, that the Egyptians were able to train their domestic cats to act in the same way as our modern retriever dogs do.

It is generally supposed that nothing will induce

a cat to enter water; but this is clearly a fallacy, like many other popular notions about the animal world. The tiger is an excellent swimmer, as many have found to their cost; and so the cat, another member of the tiger family, can swim equally well if it has any occasion to exert its powers, either in quest of prey, or to effect its escape from some enemy. As cats are exceedingly fond of fish, they will often drag them alive out of their native element whenever they get the chance. They have even been known to help themselves out of aquaria that have been left uncovered; and on moonlight nights they may be seen watching for the unwary occupants of a fish-pond, during the spawning season especially. Again, a cat will take the water in the pursuit of a rat, a fact that was proved by a friend of ours a few years ago. On one occasion being accompanied by one of his pets, a rat was started, which the cat not only pursued, but chased into the water close by, eventually swimming to an island some little distance from the bank, where it remained a short time and then swam back again.

Diana or Pasht, as that goddess was called in Egypt, was the tutelary deity of cats. Various reasons are assigned for this curious selection of the cat as the animal worthy of being dedicated to the moon. We find that according to Plutarch, the cat was not only sacred to the moon, but an emblem of it; and that a figure of a cat was fixed on a sistrum to denote the moon, just as a figure of a frog on a ring denoted a man in embryo. And further, it was supposed that the pupils of a cat's eyes always dilated as the moon got towards the full, and then decreased as the moon waned again. This has been given by some as the reason why cats were held sacred to the goddess Diana.

As before stated, the Egyptians treated these animals with unusual care and attention during their lifetime; hence it is not surprising to find that the death of a cat was regarded as a family misfortune, in consequence of which the household went into mourning. Their regret for the defunct cat was displayed then by the curious custom of shaving off the eyebrows before attending the funeral, which they invariably conducted with great pomp. Previous to interment, the bodies of these pets were embalmed, and then, when it was possible, conveyed to the city of Bubastis, where they were placed in the temples sacred to Pasht.

The wilful destruction of a cat in Egypt is looked upon as a very serious offence even now; but in the good old days (for cats) at Bubastis the offence, even supposing it to have been accidental, was punished with prompt severity. The unfortunate offender, as in the case of a Roman soldier whose story is told by Diodorus, was taken prisoner, tried, condemned, and sentenced—to death. Puss had fine times of it in those early years of superstition and animal worship; but unfortunately for her, other people formed very different notions concerning her character and occu-

pations generally; for in the middle ages cats got the reputation of being the only animals that ill-famed old women could induce to live in their houses; consequently they naturally became associated with witchcraft and all that was diabolical and uncanny by the credulous people of those times. In the Isle of Thanet a carving still exists on one of the *misericors* of the church which represents an ugly old woman sitting in a chair and holding a distaff in her hand, while two cats sit close to her, one of them indeed in the chair itself, looking as if it wished to spring on to her shoulder. It seems, however, that old women did not monopolise the cats even in those days, for it is known that in the thirteenth century one of the rules of the English convents was, that the nuns should keep no other 'beast' but a cat; hence we may infer that cats were looked upon more favourably by the religious orders than by the people generally.

The cat has been connected with many curious superstitions in various parts of the world. In some localities, for instance, it is believed that witches in the shape of cats are in the habit of roaming about the roofs of the houses during the month of February; hence they are promptly shot. In Germany also a similar notion prevails respecting black cats; in consequence of which they are never allowed to go near the cradles of young children; though it is not easy to understand why the young should be more exposed to danger from these superstitious witches than those more advanced in years. But numerous instances might be given of the incredible nonsense that has been believed, and is believed still in some places about the diabolical attributes of the cat, especially a black one. In Sicily, where the cat is looked upon as sacred to St Martha, there is a superstition that any one who wilfully or accidentally kills a cat will be punished by the serious retribution of seven years' unhappiness. So if any credit is attached to this, the life of Puss in Sicily must be as secure from harm as in the palmy days of Egyptian cat-worship. In Hungary there is a curious superstition that before a cat can become a good mouser it must be stolen. The familiar nursery story of Whittington and his Cat, as well as the favourite children's fable of Puss in Boots, can be traced some hundreds of years back.

It is perhaps an unfortunate thing that the habits of cats are not more carefully observed, as it is by no means certain that their peculiarities are fully understood. By some their intelligence is very much underrated, and they are often looked upon as lazy uninteresting animals, only to be tolerated in a house so long as they devote themselves to nocturnal raids against mice or rats, as the case may be. However, they cannot be put on a par with the dog, for as far as present as well as past experience shews, the cat, with certain honourable exceptions, is neither as useful, as faithful, nor as intelligent as our canine friend.

The dog knows its owner, and will always make itself comfortable in any place that the owner chooses to take it, provided he is there himself. The cat, on the other hand, knows its owner's house and furniture, attaches itself to them, and seldom troubles itself at all about the presence or absence of its owner; hence the great difficulty of removing cats from one home to another. Sometimes they may be induced to take kindly to new quarters, but very rarely. If puss be taken to a strange house, it will first of all examine and smell every article of furniture in the rooms it is allowed to enter; if it finds the same things that it has been accustomed to, perhaps the discovery may reconcile it to remain; but if all is strange, the creature exhibits symptoms of positive distress, and will even make efforts to return to the old home; and this may perhaps account for the stories told of Egyptian cats rushing back into blazing houses after they had been once brought out of them with difficulty; for it has been gravely asserted that the Egyptian cats preferred to perish with their homes when fires broke out, rather than abandon them.

Some years ago *The Times* gave an account of a remarkable incident, illustrating in a striking way the sagacity and kindness of a dog; the account had appeared in two other newspapers, but we have not the means of verifying it. A cat named Dick was one day enjoying a meal of scraps, when a needle and thread became entangled in his dinner; the poor animal unconsciously partook of these adjuncts, which stuck in his throat. Carlo, a dog on very friendly terms with Dick, observed that something was wrong, hurried up to him, and seemed to receive some kind of communication from him. The dog and the cat became physician and patient. Carlo commenced operations by licking Dick's neck, the cat holding its head a little aside to give Carlo a fair chance. This licking operation continued with short intervals of rest for nearly twenty-four hours, Carlo occasionally pausing to press his tongue against his friend's neck, as if trying to find some sharp-pointed instrument thrust from the inside to the outside. At length Carlo was seen, his whole body quivering with excitement, trying to catch something with his teeth. In this he succeeded. Giving a sudden jerk, he pulled the needle through the hide of the cat, where it hung by the thread which still held it from the inside. A by-stander then finished the surgical operation by drawing out the thread; and Carlo looked as if he were saying: 'See what I did!'

We have just been told of a very remarkable instance of intelligence displayed by a cat belonging to one of our contributors. After having waited in vain outside a rat's hole for the appearance of the occupant, puss hit upon the plan of 'drawing' her prey, by *fitching a piece of meat and placing it near the hole as a bait*, after which she hid behind a box and waited for results. Whether the bait took or not, we are not informed, but the wily scheme deserved success.

For the following instances of affection and sagacity in cats, we are indebted to a lady correspondent.

'Last October,' she says, 'I was staying a few days with a friend in a small country village not many miles from Edinburgh. One morning I was about to leave my bedroom, and had just opened the window, when I saw a large yellow cat wandering about in the grass which surrounded the house. The creature had a timid scared look, as if not much in the habit of associating with human beings. I spoke to it in a tone of encouragement, however; on hearing which it leaped up on the window-sill and began to purr in a friendly way. I told my friend the lady of the house about the cat, when she gave me the following account of it. "This poor animal belonged to my deceased father. It came to our house a very small kitten, and was accustomed from time to time to receive food from my father's hand, with now and then a little caress or kindly word. But my father was not a cat-fancier, and as a general rule did not take any great notice of the creature. About a year and a half ago my father grew seriously ill, and after a few weeks of suffering, died. During his illness the cat went up and down stairs like a distracted creature, refusing food, and mewling again and again in a mournful way. Sometimes it came into the sick-room, and jumped on the bed; but its master was too ill to notice it, and it went away with a disappointed look. When all was over, and the last attentions had been paid to my father, and all was quiet in the death-chamber, the poor cat came in and took up its position on the bed at his feet. From this place nothing would induce the creature to move; and feeling astonished at its fidelity and affection, we let it lie during the day; though strange to say, it manifested a desire to leave the room at night, returning always about nine in the morning, and if the door was shut, mewling till it gained admittance. On the funeral-day, the faithful creature did not seem to understand the absence of its master; it left the room upon the removal of the body; but the first thing we saw when the mourners returned was the poor pussie lying at the door of the chamber. It was long," said the lady in conclusion, "before the affectionate animal recovered its usual sprightliness; and I would not like anything to happen to a creature which has testified such a strong affection for one so dear to me."

Another story is as follows: 'A cousin of mine had a cat which had just brought into the world some fine healthy kittens. According to the usual custom on these occasions, some of the kittens were drowned, while two were retained for the mother to rear. These were kept in a compartment of an old kitchen table or "dresser." This snug retreat had a little door which was kept closed by means of a bolt. One day a young visitor desired to see the kittens, which were accordingly taken to the drawing-room by one of the daughters of the house. During the absence of the kittens, the cat, which had been in the garden, came into the kitchen, and went as usual to repose beside her little ones. She looked into the dresser, and finding no kittens there, "*clashed*" to the door in a rage, and left the kitchen, her tail thick with indignation! This fact was told me by one of the young ladies of the household, who was busy in the kitchen at the time and saw the whole thing. The cat's furious manner of slamming the door resembled so closely

an irate housewife's way of doing so, that my informant was exceedingly amused, and regarded the cat henceforth as a sort of wonder!

SPECIMENS OF HINDU ENGLISH.

AMONG the great changes which are now passing over our gigantic dependencies in the Indian peninsula, not the least noteworthy is the rapid spread of a knowledge of the English language among the native population. In certain districts of the Madras Presidency, this knowledge of English may almost be said to be extending like wild-fire. The English civil officer riding through a native village will sometimes be greeted with a 'Good-morning, sar,' from a small boy whose sole costume may be a string tied round the waist, and whose English education may have extended no further than a few such interjectional phrases. But among the school-boys, college lads, and a heterogeneous collection of half-taught young men in search of employment, we meet with most extraordinary feats in the use of our language. A well-known story is told of a native clerk who, being detained at home by a boil, wrote to his employer to say that he could not attend his duties 'owing to the suffering caused by one boil as per margin.' And in the margin of his letter was delineated with accuracy the form and appearance of the offending growth!

The following was the amusing though pertinent answer of a student in the University of Madras to a question about earthquakes and volcanic action: 'A month or two ago, says the *Times*, a violent eruption of an unusual kind took place in Peru and Chili in South America; smoke, flames, and hot melted matter were thrown with great violence on the neighbouring districts from the hollow tops of the volcanic mountains. Thousands of people of all orders and sexes were destroyed. When this was the case an abominable earthquake took its part. Magnificent houses, huge piles, largest trees, splendid temples, different kinds of people with their relatives, and even large mountains were swallowed up and goes on.'

The letters of native applicants for employment are often couched in most comical terms. The writer once received a letter from a clerk who thought he had not received the promotion he deserved. The missive began: 'HONORED SIR—Fathomless is the sea of troubles in which I sail for 1 year.' This mixture of poetic fervour and numerical accuracy is unique of its kind. The following petition speaks for itself; the style is common enough; but the writer is glad to say that it is the only instance he has known of such an offer of apostasy as is here disclosed; the proper names are suppressed: 'The humble petition of — most respectfully sheweth; I am a Tanjorean [that is, native of Tanjore]. My name is —. My age is 20. I came here to my uncle's house. My uncle is the Police Inspector of —. I want to be a Christian. There are two Police Inspectors are vacant. Please recommend me to be one of these Inspectors. As soon as I received the Inspector's employment, at once you may take me in Christian. There is no a single doubt at all. If you want to see me tell a word to your Head Constable. . . . I heard that you are mild, simplicity, and probity. I don't know to write

more than this to you. Please excuse me if you find any mistakes. Shall ever pray.—I am your most obedient and humble servant, —.'

The next letter was sent by a clever hard-working native clerk who had fallen ill. The signature alone is in his own handwriting, and the letter was probably dictated to a friend. 'MOST HONORED SIR—I have been suffering from severest fever and bile for the last 10 days and I am quite unable to move or to do anything. I lay quite prostrate on my bed senseless (now and then)—continually painting—my sight fails—not a drop of water I drank—no food—and having been under imminent danger day before yesterday, my lucid intervals are very few, dangerous symptoms frequently appear and I am not sure whether I will be able to see the days before me—My case is very doubtful, precarious and dangerous. I therefore most humbly pray that your Honor will be most graciously pleased to grant one month's privilege leave. . . . I beg to remain, —.'

The following petition reads somewhat as though Lord Dundreary had helped to compose it. It is from a pleader or attorney in a petty civil court applying for the post of cashier in a government treasury. Such cashiers have to give security in a considerable sum for the due performance of their duties, and as a precaution against fraud. It is this security (£500) which is meant by the word 'bail' in the petition. 'MOST HONORED SIR—This application is with great humility presented to your honour by —. The gazette reads that such as have a wish to find themselves suffered to occupy the room of cashier, now in vacancy, should undergo a greatly advanced bail of Rupees 5000. He is appointed a pleader on the 11th D. day 1869, and by the civil judge in character with his petitionally implored request, and he attends since the heresaid down to the present age very punctually indeed his dearly bought post. . . . He is, here he does very hopefully indeed state, ready no matter at any while to give the here-demanded bail, Rs. 5000. Your humble and very punctual petitioner implores your of course very widely diffused charity to point to him his most humbly requested employ, or otherwise, if ever so, any other one not far below it. Your honour's petitioner in requital and in duty bound very closely, will perhaps never add even a second, while to diligence without bending his whole heart to pray to the universal God to take care of and to cherish, your honour together with all your family members for ever and anon. He remains very affectionately truly yours, humble waiter, —.'

The following curious epistle was addressed to an officer holding an important post. It is hardly necessary to add that he was neither Duke nor Lord. It will be observed that the writer does not directly ask for monetary aid to relieve him from his difficulties, but simply his 'Lordship's' protection, and as a relief to his own feelings and troubles. 'MY LORD DUKE—I have the honor to inform to your Lordship's information that I will always obey your Lordship's order ten thousand times do not be angry my Lord Duke upon me. I beg that your Lordship that should excuse my faults it is my duty to get your Lordship's favor ten thousand times excuse my all faults my Lord Duke. I am much fearful I am very poor men my poor family requires to your Lordship's favor. My family is

very poor family. I got a Mother Grandmother Daughterinlaw and my family &c. I had a debt twenty-five thousand Rupees. I am suffering much trouble for debtors. I believe that you are my father and mother for my part only I want your Lordship's kind favour. If your Lordships be angry or even little angry immediately I and my family must die at once, certainly it is my opinion I have no protector but your Lordship. If your Lordships angry I must die at once. I am much fearful. If I had your Lordship's favor it is quite enough for me. You are Governor I am poor men. If your Lordship be angry upon me it is quite my misfortune and my family therefore do not be angry. This is not Government memorial. I thought that your Lordship is my father and mother for my part therefore I have written all my poor affairs to your gracious informations. Hereafter I never write any letter to your Lordship nor I did not require any answer, only remember me with kindness it is ten thousand profits for me, excuse the trouble I have given your Lordships most valuable time. I have, &c. . . . P.S. I beg your Lordship will continue your favor towards me and my family. Protect my Lord Duke. This is not memorial only for your Lordships Gracious information. Protect me my Lord. This is First Mistake. Excuse me my Lord, hereafter I never do any mistakes. I remain, &c. . . .

Some years ago a great flood carried away a fine bridge over the river Tambampum, near the chief town of the province of Tinnevely. This bridge had been built some thirty years before by a rich native gentleman named Sulochana Mudaliar, to whom a memorial was erected at one of the approaches to the bridge. The magistrate and collector—as the ruler of the province is termed—by dint of great exertions raised in subscriptions about seven thousand pounds; a sum sufficient to pay for the restoration of the bridge. When the work was at last completed, a grand opening ceremony took place, which gave occasion for a number of poetic effusions in Tamil and in English by native aspirants. The translation from the Tamil is the work of a native, and the following is the reply of a great feudal landholder, who had been invited to attend the opening ceremony: 'MY DEAR SIR—I received your affectionate ticket wanting my company on the occasion of the reopening of Sulochana Mudaliar's bridge on the 2d December. I was quite pleased to come down for the occasion but I regret to inform you that I and — are prevented from coming from being a little sick. You will I humbly trust possibly forgive me.—I beg to remain, Sir, Yours most obediently.

Extract from a translation of a Tamil poem :

Who is to judge of the might of Mr —. He and Messrs — and — of the eminent Tinnevely District have had the pleasure of constructing the bridge so to be praised by the world and allowed the people to pass over its freely. May they live for ever.

The bridge fell down in the evening of Sunday, 15th November 1869. By the noise of which I swooned away and trouble came also.

How can I describe your pains O Mr —. You worked as diligently at the works of Mr — as the swinging of a swing and constructed the bridge with success and very soon and completed it within the fixed time. You beauty! . . .

I have sung upon you in my adversity and hunger. I pray you eminent men to place your mercy upon me at your pleasure.

While you are all occupying this eminent world with great fame, I undergo troubles like bees that tumbled down in honey. What can I do. Cause some employment to be given me without failure through the hand of — with certainty.

We will conclude with a specimen of female composition in the form of a letter sent home by a good old nurse or ayah named Martha, who had accompanied her employers to England in charge of a baby, and who had then been sent back to her native village in India. Both in its sentiment and diction the missive is extremely touching.

'To the Presens of — and — most Respected and Honored sheweth. The under Signed your Honor's obedient The Mortha Ayah with due Respectfully Begg to in form you about my considerations which I hope will meet of your honor's kindest approval. Respected Master and Masters I and my Relations are all well By thanks of God and Faver of your Honor's while in this Time I hope you will be all right By thanks of All mighty's. This Poor and Obiedient servend wrote a letter to your honor when I came to — I hope you may Receive it, I am doing Nothing Since I left you by the Reason of no any Respected Place to work. here is great Calam in this year and all so Greatest Famine. 8 measures of Rice per a Rupee [between three and four times the usual price]. I hope Dear Baby will speak and Walk at this Time I am very angshes to see her and I lovely Thousan kisses to the Dear Baby, Respected Madam will you kindly send me the Picture of the Baby's to keep with me as you Promise me. I humbly begs you to say my meny Thanks to the Mr and Mrs — and the childrens of them. Please tell my thanks to Miss Lysa and Miss Looois [servants Eliza and Louise]. I hope I can see you very soon Back in this Place. Therefore I humbly Begg to Remain Most Honored Madam and Sir Yours truly most obiedient servend Mortha Ayah. Misis — she looking to get me a Employment anywhere. They are all well. The Dobin [a favourite horse called Dobbin] he all right. Madam That this Poor widdows was Very much happy at the Lost Year By your Exalend honor's kindness. But this new Year I pased very miserably.'

CURIOUS CASES OF SLEEP-WALKING.

On the above curious subject a retired naval officer obligingly sends us the following notes.

One bright moonlight night I was on deck, as was frequently my wont, chatting with the lieutenant of the middle watch. It was nearly calm, the ship making little way through the water, and the moon's light nearly as bright as day. We were together leaning over the capstan, chatting away, when W — suddenly exclaimed: 'Look! H —, at that sentry,' and pointing to the quarter-deck marine who was pacing slowly backwards and forwards on the lee-side of the deck.

'Well,' I replied, after watching him somewhat inattentively as he passed once or twice on his regular beat, 'what of him?'

'Why, don't you see he is fast asleep? Take a good look at him when he next passes.'

I did so, and found W—— was right. The man, although pacing and turning regularly at the usual distance, was fast asleep with his eyes closed.

When next the man passed, W—— stepped quickly and noiselessly to his side, and pacing with him, gently disengaged the bunch of keys which were his special charge—being the keys of the spirit-room, shell-rooms, store-rooms, &c.—from the fingers of his left hand, to which they were suspended by a small chain; he then removed the bayonet from his other hand, and laid it and the keys on the capstan head. After letting him take another turn or two, W—— suddenly called 'Sentry!'

'Sir?' replied the man, instantly stopping and facing round as he came to the 'attention.'

'Why, you were fast asleep, sentry.'

'No, sir.'

'But I say you were.'

'No, sir. I assure you I was not.'

'You were not, eh? Well, where are the keys?'

The man instantly brought up his hand to shew them, as he supposed; but to his confusion the hand was empty.

'Where is your bayonet?' continued W——.

The poor fellow brought forward his other hand, but that was empty also. But the puzzled look of astonishment he put on was more than we could stand; both burst out laughing; and when the keys and bayonet were pointed out to him lying on the capstan, the poor fellow was perfectly dumfounded. W—— was too merry over the joke, however, to punish the man, and he escaped with a warning not to fall asleep again.

Sentries and look-outs must be very liable to fall asleep from the very nature of their monotonous pacing, and this may in some degree account for the facility with which sentries have at times been surprised and secured before they could give an alarm. In this instance, the most curious fact, I think, was the regularity with which the man continued to pace his distances and turn at the right moment. I have known other instances of sentries and others walking in their sleep, though the end has not always been so pleasant to the victims. In one case, the quarter-deck sentry, in the middle of the night, crashed down the ward-room hatchway with musket and fixed bayonet, with a rattling that startled us all out of our cabins. The fellow fell on his back upon the top of the mess-table, but not much the worse for his exploit. On another occasion a messenger boy paid us a visit in the night: he fell upon a chair, which he smashed to pieces, but the sleeper escaped unhurt.

These can hardly be considered true cases of somnambulism, but shew how men may continue their occupations when overcome by sleep. Nothing but seeing his bayonet and the keys lying on the capstan could have ever convinced the marine that he had been sleeping; no mere assertion to that effect would ever have influenced him.

POURING OIL ON THE TROUBLED WATERS.

The idea expressed in the above heading, though commonly held to be of sacred origin, or as merely a poetical manner of expressing a commonplace occurrence, may nevertheless be taken literally

as well as figuratively, it being, as a matter of fact, a saying which has satisfactory groundwork in natural facts. It was recently stated in evidence before the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Herring Fisheries of Scotland, that the practice of pouring a quantity of oil from a boat on to the surface of the sea during heavy weather had the immediate effect of calming the waters and relieving the boat from the danger of heavy broken water. 'But,' added one of the witnesses, 'although the oil has this effect for a time, the sea becomes rougher afterwards, and so the advantage of adopting the plan is practically not very great.' It is more than probable that this latter statement can be explained by the law of comparisons. The oil cast out on the weather-side of the boat effectually assuages the violence of the waves, which instead of breaking over it, glide smoothly under it. Presently the film of oil becomes dispersed, and the waves, again unchecked, appear, by comparison with the late calm, to be still more formidable. A fresh dose of oil would, however, again prove advantageous, but the experiment is seldom repeated, and so the efficacy of the remedy is called into question. The best way of adopting it is to throw overboard a barrel or skin filled with oil, and pierced in two places, to allow of the gradual escape of the contents. This reservoir should be secured by a rope, and kept on the weather-side of the boat, and renewed as often as necessary. The plan is frequently adopted, with the best results, by native boatmen in the Persian Gulf and in parts of the Indian Ocean, where sudden squalls are apt to spring up.

LOVE UNSUNG.

Glide on, sweet purling stream,
And mingle with the sea;
Adown each glen thy waters gleam,
In merry dance and froe.
Sing on, sweet bird; the blue expanse
Of heaven's vault is thine;
O lap thy soul into a trance;
Pour forth thy song divine;
But I must not give forth my strain;
I love a maid, but love in vain.

The blithesome bird that haunts the vale
Will bear but half her grief;
She floats her sorrow on the gale,
And gives her soul relief;
The meanest floweret on the field
Basks in the noonday sun;
And every creature hath a rest,
When daily toil is done;
I to myself make bootless moan,
And bear my burden all alone.

A grief that links two hearts in bliss,
Is but a hidden treasure;
What's but a thorn when singly borne,
When shared becomes a pleasure;
The finer feelings of the soul
Are known by mutual union;
Each spirit hath its counterpart,
With whom to hold communion;
But she is gone, and leaves with me
The rest of the unsleeping sea.

M. P.

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TOBY.

TOBY was a sheep of middling size, lightly built, finely limbed, as agile as a deer, with dark intelligent gazelle-like eyes, and a small pair of neatly curled horns, with the points protruding about an inch from his forehead. His colour was white except on the face, which was slightly darker.

As an old sailor I wish to say something of Toby's history. I was on board the good brig *Reliance* of Arbroath, bound from Cork to Galatz, on the left bank of the Danube. All went well with the little ship until she reached the Grecian Archipelago, and here she was detained by adverse winds and contrary currents, making the passage through the islands both a dangerous and a difficult one. When the mariners at length reached Tenedos, it was found that the current from the Dardanelles was running out like a mill-stream, which made it impossible to proceed; and accordingly the anchor was cast, the jolly-boat was lowered, and the captain took the opportunity of going on shore for fresh water, of which they were scarce. Having filled his casks, it was only natural for a sailor to long to treat himself to a mess of fresh meat as well as water. He accordingly strolled away through the little town; but soon found that butchers were as yet unknown in Tenedos. Presently, however, a man came up with a sheep, which the captain at once purchased for five shillings. This was Toby, with whom, his casks of water, and a large basket of ripe fruit, the skipper returned to his vessel. There happened to be on board this ship a large and rather useless half-bred Newfoundland. This dog was the very first to receive the attentions of Master Toby, for no sooner had he placed foot on the dock, than he ran full tilt at the poor Newfoundland, hitting him square on the ribs and banishing almost every bit of breath from his body. 'Only a sheep,' thought the dog, and flew at Toby at once. But Toby was too nimble to be caught, and he planted his blows with such force and precision, that at last the poor dog was fain to take to his heels, howling

with pain, and closely pursued by Toby. The dog only escaped by getting out on to the bowsprit, where of course Toby could not follow, but quietly lay down in a safe place to wait and watch for him.

This first adventure shewed that Toby was no ordinary sheep. How he had been trained to act an independent part no one could tell. His education, certainly, had not been neglected. That same evening the captain was strolling on the quarter-deck eating a bunch of grapes, when Toby came up to him, and standing on one end, planted his fore-feet on his shoulders, and looked into his face, as much as to say: 'I'll have some of those, please.'

And he was not disappointed, for the captain amicably went shares with Toby. Toby appeared so grateful for even little favours, and so attached to his new master, that Captain Brown had not the heart to kill him. He would rather, he thought, go without fresh meat all his life. So Toby was installed as ship's pet. Ill-fared it then with the poor Newfoundland; he was so battered and cowed, that for dear life's sake he dared not leave his kennel even to take his food. It was determined, therefore, to put an end to the poor fellow's misery, and he was accordingly shot. This may seem cruel, but it was kind in the main.

Now there was on board the *Reliance* an old Irish cook. One morning soon after the arrival of Toby, Paddy, who had a round bald pate, be it remembered, was bending down over a wooden platter cleaning the vegetables for dinner, when Toby took the liberty of insinuating his woolly nose to help himself. The cook naturally enough struck Toby on the snout with the flat of the knife and went on with his work. Toby backed astern at once; a blow he never could and never did receive without taking vengeance. Besides, he imagined, no doubt, that holding down his bald head as he did, the cook was desirous of trying the strength of their respective skulls. When he had backed astern sufficiently for his purpose, Toby gave a spring: the two heads came into violent

collision, and down rolled poor Paddy on the deck. Then Toby coolly finished all the vegetables, and walked off as if nothing had happened out of the usual.

Toby's hatred of the whole canine race was invincible. One day when the captain and his pet were taking their usual walk on the promenade, there came on shore the skipper of a Falmouth ship, accompanied by a very large formidable-looking dog. And the dog only resembled his master, as you observe dogs usually do. As soon as he saw Toby he commenced to set his dog upon him; but Toby had seen him coming and was quite *en garde*; so a long and fierce battle ensued, in which Toby was slightly wounded and the dog's head was severely cut. Quite a multitude had assembled to witness the fight, and the ships' riggings were alive with sailors. At one time the brutal owner of the dog, seeing his pet getting worsted, attempted to assist him; but the crowd would have pitched him neck and crop into the river, had he not desisted. At last both dog and sheep were exhausted, and drew off, as if by mutual consent. The dog seated himself close to the outer edge of the platform, which was about three feet higher than the river's bank, and Toby went, as he was wont to do, and stood between his master's legs, resting his head fondly on the captain's clasped hands, but never took his eyes off the foe. Just then a dog on board one of the ships happened to bark, and the Falmouth dog looked round. This was Toby's chance, and he did not miss it or his enemy either. He was upon him like a bolt from a catapult. One furious blow knocked the dog off the platform, next moment Toby had leaped on top of him, and was chasing the yelling animal towards his own ship. There is no doubt Toby would have crossed the plank and followed him on board, had not his feet slipped and precipitated him into the river. A few minutes afterwards, when Toby, dripping with wet, returned to the platform to look for his master, he was greeted with ringing cheers; and many was the pinstre spent in treating our woolly friend to fruit. Toby was the hero of Galatz from that hour; but the Falmouth dog never ventured on shore again, and his master as seldom as possible.

On her downward voyage, when the vessel reached Sulina, at the mouth of the river, it became necessary to lighten her in order to get her over the bar. This took some time, and Toby's master frequently had to go on shore; but Toby himself was not permitted to accompany him, on account of the filth and muddiness of the place. When the captain wished to return he came down to the river-side and hailed the ship to send a boat. And poor Toby was always on the watch for his master if no one else was. He used to place his fore-feet on the bulwarks and bleat loudly towards the shore, as much as to say: 'I see you, master, and you'll have a boat in a brace of shakes.' Then if no one was on deck, Toby would at once proceed to rouse all hands fore and aft. If the mate Mr Gilbert pretended to be asleep on a locker, he would fairly roll him off on to the deck.

Toby was revengeful to a degree, and if any one struck him, he would wait his chance, even if for days, to pay him out with interest in his own coin. He was at first very jealous of two little pigs which were bought as companions to him; but latterly he grew fond of them, and as

they soon got very fat, Toby used to roll them along the deck like a couple of foot-balls. There were two parties on board that Toby did not like, or rather that he liked to annoy whenever he got the chance, namely the cook and the cat. He used to cheat the former and chase the latter on every possible occasion. If his master took pussy and sat down with him on his knee, Toby would at once commence to strike it off with his head. Finding that she was so soft and yielding that this did not hurt her, he would then lift his fore-foot and attempt to strike her down with that; failing in that, he would bite viciously at her; and if the captain laughed at him, then all Toby's vengeance would be wreaked on his master. But after a little scene like this, the sheep would always come and coax for forgiveness. Our hero was taught a great many tricks, among others to leap backward and forward through a life-buoy. When his hay and fresh provisions went done, Toby would eat pea-soup, invariably slobbering all his face in so doing, and even pick a bone like a dog. He was likewise very fond of boiled rice, and his drink was water, although he preferred porter and ale; but while allowing him a reasonable quantity of beer, the captain never encouraged him in the bad habit, the sailors had taught him, of chewing tobacco.

It is supposed that some animals have a pre-sense of coming storms. Toby used to go regularly to the bulwarks every night, and placing his feet against them sniff all around him. If content, he would go and lie down and fall fast asleep; but it was a sure sign of bad weather coming before morning when Toby kept wandering by his master's side and would not go to rest.

One day Captain Brown was going up the steps of the Custom-house, when he found that not only Toby but Toby's two pigs were following close at his heels. He turned round to drive them all back; but Toby never thought for a moment that his master meant that he should return.

'It is these two awkward creatures of pigs,' thought Toby, 'that master can't bear the sight of.'

So Toby went to work at once, and first rolled one piggie down-stairs, then went up and rolled the other piggie down-stairs; but the one piggie always got to the top of the stair again by the time his brother piggie was rolled down to the bottom. Thinking that as far as appearances went, Toby had his work cut out for the next half-hour, his master entered the Custom-house. But Toby and his friends soon found some more congenial employment; and when Captain Brown returned, he found them all together in an outer room, dancing about with the remains of a new mat about their necks, which they had just succeeded in tearing to pieces.

Their practical jokes cost the captain some money one way or another.

One day the three friends made a combined attack on a woman, who was carrying a young pig in a sack; this little pig happened to squeak, when Toby and his pigs went to the rescue. They tore the woman's dress to atoms and delivered the little pig. Toby was very much addicted to describing the arc of a circle; that was all very good when it was merely a fence he was flying over, but when it happened that a window was in the centre of the arc, then it came rather hard on the captain's pocket.

In order to enable him to pick up a little after his long voyage, Toby was sent to country lodgings at a farmer's. But barely a week had elapsed when the farmer sent him back again with his compliments, saying that he would not keep him for his weight in gold. He led the farmer's sheep into all sorts of mischief that they had never dreamed of before, and had defied the dogs, and half-killed one or two of them.

Toby returned like himself, for when he saw his master in the distance he bleated aloud for joy, and flew towards him like a wild thing, dragging the poor boy in the mud behind him.

Toby was taken on board a vessel which was carrying out emigrants to New York, and was constantly employed all day in driving the steerage passengers off the quarter-deck. He never hurt the children, however, but contented himself by tumbling them along the deck and stealing their bread and butter.

From New York Toby went to St Stephens. There a dog flew out and bit Captain Brown in the leg. It was a dear bite, however, for the dog, for Toby caught it in the act and hardly left life enough in it to crawl away. At St Stephens Toby was shorn, the weather being oppressively hot. No greater insult could have been offered him. His anger and chagrin were quite ludicrous to witness. He examined himself a dozen times, and every time he looked round and saw his naked back he tried to run away from himself. But when his master, highly amused at his antics, attempted to add insult to injury, by pointing his finger at him and laughing him to scorn, Toby's wrath knew no bounds, and he attacked the captain on the spot. He managed, however, to elude the blow, and Toby walked on shore in a pet. Whether it was that he was ashamed of his ridiculous appearance, or of attempting to strike his kind master in anger, cannot be known, but for three days and nights Toby never appeared, and the captain was very wretched indeed. But when he did return, he was so exceedingly penitent and so loving and coaxing that he was forgiven on the spot.

When Toby arrived with his vessel in Queen's Dock, Liverpool, on a rainy morning, some nice fresh hay was brought on board. This was a great treat for our pet, and after he had eaten his fill, he thought he could not do better than sleep among it, which thought he immediately transmuted to action, covering himself all up except the head. By-and-by the owner of the ship came on board, and taking a survey of things in general he spied Toby's head.

"Hollo!" he said, "what's that?" striking Toby's nose with his umbrella. "Stuffed, isn't it?"

Stuffed or not stuffed, there was a body behind it—as the owner soon knew to his cost—and a spirit that never brooked a blow, for next moment he found himself lying on his back with his legs wagging in the air in the most expressive manner, while Toby stood triumphantly over him waiting to repeat the dose if required.

The following anecdote shows Toby's reasoning powers. He was standing one day near the dock-yard foreman's house, when the dinner bell rang, and just at the same time a servant came out with a piece of bread for Toby. Every day after this, as soon as the same bell rang—"That calls me," said Toby to himself, and off he would trot to

the foreman's door. If the door was not at once opened he used to knock with his head; and he would knock and knock again until the servant, for peace-sake, presented him with a slice of bread.

And now Toby's tale draws near its close. The owner never forgave that blow, and one day coming by chance across the following entry in the ship's books, "Tenedos—to one sheep, 6s.," he immediately claimed Toby as his rightful property. It was all in vain that the captain begged hard for his poor pet, and even offered ten times his nominal value for him. The owner was deaf to all entreaties and obdurate. So the two friends were parted. Toby was sent a long way into the country to Carnoustie, in Forfarshire, to amuse some of the owner's children, who were at school there. But the sequel shews how very deeply and dearly even a sheep can love a kind-hearted master. After the captain left him, poor Toby refused all food and died of grief in one week's time.

"I have had many pets," says Captain Brown, "but only one Toby."

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XVI.—LIFTS A CORNER OF THE MASK.

RUTH WILLIS bending forward, her gloved fingers clasped upon the open letter that she held, and her pale face on fire, as it were, with eager passion, seemed sadly out of tune with the still beauty of that sylvan spot, where first the crystal Start, freed from its moorland cradle, gushed forth as a real river, although of puny dimensions, bearing its watery tribute to the sea. Above, arched the feathery larch, the slender hazel, and the tapering ash. Branches of the mountain-ash projected like the stone frettings of some mediæval belfrey. The clear sweet warble of mavis and merle came throbbing softly to the ear from the dim green heart of the summer woodlands. The letter which she had purloined—the theft may have been prompted by the impulse of the moment, and it is charitable to hope that such deeds were new to her—was now hers, to peruse at her leisure. She read it then, did Ruth Willis, again and again, slowly and deliberately, scanning and weighing every word, as though she had been a student of the cuneiform character, puzzling out Babylonian tablets by the aid of vague and tentative keys to the long-dead language of which they bore the impress.

The letter ran thus:

S BOND'S CHAMBERS,
ST NICHOLAS POULTNEY, LONDON.

DEAR SIR SYKES—It might be as well perhaps that we should come to an understanding at once respecting the business on which I spoke to you at the *De Vere Arms* some days since. I do not know whether you are aware that I hold evidence substantiating the entire circumstances of the case, which I could at any time reveal. I will mention no names of place or person, since this is unwelcome to you; but in return for my consideration for your interests, and for those whose prosperity and good names are now knit up in yours, I consider myself to possess a claim upon your confidence. I therefore permit myself to think that as your legal adviser I could conduct your affairs so that you should be under no apprehension for the future, provided

always that the entire management (professionally) of your estate and property should be placed in my hands. This, after due consideration, I think would be the most expeditious manner of settling matters for the advantage of all parties concerned.

Trusting that you may see this arrangement in the same light as myself, and that it may meet with your approval, as the only means of arriving at a definitive understanding, I shall await your reply. I beg to remain, my dear sir, very obediently and faithfully yours,

ENOCW WILKINS, *Solicitor*.

Such was the letter which Sir Sykes Denzil had unguardedly left upon his library table; and it may be admitted that a more impudent epistle has rarely been addressed to a gentleman of equal station to that of the proprietor of Carbery. It was difficult at first sight to believe that a demand so audacious in itself, and so offensively urged, could be intended as anything else than a sorry jest. Yet that the writer was quite in earnest, nay more, that he felt himself assured of not craving in vain for the coveted boon, was palpable to so attentive a critic as was Ruth Willis.

'If any man had dared to write thus to me,' she said, slowly hissing out the words between her half-shut teeth, 'and I had filled the position held by yonder pompous dolt, I would have—ay, given him cause to repent it.'

And the lurid light that glimmered in her dark eyes, and the hardening of her shrewd pale face until it seemed as though of chiselled marble rather than sentient flesh, and the swift and sudden gesture with which she raised and shook her clenched hand, as though it held a dagger—these signs were the revelation of a fierce and unscrupulous nature, kept down by the pressure of circumstances, but ready at pinch of need to flame forth, as the hot lava bubbles and seethes beneath the crust of cold ashes in which the vines of the Italian peasant have struck root.

Again and with deliberate care did the baronet's ward read the letter through. Then she refolded it and replaced it in her pocket, and then consulted her watch. Only a few minutes had as yet elapsed since her escape—for it was little else—from the mansion.

'I must not go back as yet,' she said thoughtfully. 'By this time the whole household will be astir like a hive of angry bees, if, as is all but certain, Sir Sykes has not had self-control enough to keep his own counsel as to the loss he has sustained. He should have burned this choice epistle the moment he had made himself master of its purport; but he is of that order of men who treasure up the very proofs that sooner or later overwhelm them with a weight of silent evidence. Was it not the learned forger, silver-tongued, plausible Dr Dodd, who was left alone with the fatal document that brought him to the gallows, alone in a room where a brisk fire was blazing? One flash of mother-wit, one motion of the hand, and nothing but a heap of tinder would have remained to bear witness of the fraud. But no! The doomed wretch waited passive for the hangman's fingers to adjust the hempen noose about his miserable neck. So would not I!'

Again the girl glanced impatiently at her watch. 'How Time lags!' she exclaimed petulantly,

as she marked the slow crawling of the thin black minute-hand around the dial; 'heeding nothing, influenced by nothing, inexorable in his measured pace. It is a pain to such as I am to be forced to loiter here inactive, when there is a foe to cope with, a peril to avert.'

She said no more, but paced restlessly to and fro along the river-bank, beneath the arching boughs, with somewhat of the air and tread of a caged panther wearing away the sullen hours of captivity behind the restraining bars. Her very step had in it somewhat of the litherness which we notice in the movements of the savage, and the working of her keen features told how deeply her busy brain was pondering on the events of the day. Ruth's face, when once it was withdrawn from the observation of others, was a singularly expressive one. When she had left the room wherein Jasper had fallen asleep among his pillows, the countenance of Sir Sykes's ward had been eloquent with weariness and contempt. Now it told of resentment restrained, but only in part restrained, by a caution that was rather of habit than of instinct.

'An hour more! yet an hour,' said the girl at length, again looking at her watch, and then she stood leaning against the tough stem of a quivering mountain-ash that almost overhung the brawling torrent. She still kept in her left hand the book which she had had with her when entering the library at Carbery; but even had not the volume been one which she had lately perused, she was in no mood for reading. Manifestly her mind was shaping out some desperate resolution.

'I will do it!' she said at last, lifting her head with a defiant glitter in her lustrous eyes; 'before I sleep it shall be written. I know and gauge beforehand the risk of such a course; know too that I am loosening my own grasp on the helm if I invite another to aid me. But that is better than to be foiled at the outset, and after weeks spent in this self-schooling, and in the sickening task of cajoling a shallow, knavish egotist, such as the future Sir Jasper will be until his dying day. Let those look to it who for their own schemes venture to cross my path!'

The hour, however slowly it might appear to pass in the estimation of one whose nerves were on fire with excitement, nevertheless did wear itself out, and there was an end of waiting.

With tranquil step and unruffled brow, Sir Sykes's ward returned to her guardian's house, to find, as she had anticipated, confusion and dismay prevalent there; the servants sullen or clamorous, the baronet's daughters distressed, and Sir Sykes himself in a state of feverish suspicion, which almost made him forget the traditions of good-breeding.

'Do you, Miss Willis, know anything of this?' he asked half rudely, the instant that he caught sight of his ward.

'I—know of what?' returned Ruth innocently, as she lifted her eyes, with a startled look, to his.

'You forget, papa,' said Lucy Denzil, almost indignantly, 'that Ruth has heard of nothing. She was away from the house all the time.'

'Yes, yes; I beg pardon of course,' exclaimed the baronet reddening, but still fixing his eyes searchingly on the placid face of his ward.

The Indian orphan bore his scrutiny with an admirable composure. Her lower lip trembled a little, as was natural, when she turned towards

Lucy. 'Pray do tell me,' she said, 'what has happened?' for it really does seem as though I had been unfortunate enough to make Sir Sykes angry with me.'

'Papa has lost a letter—a letter of importance,' said Lucy, blushing as she spoke; 'and as the servants deny all knowledge of it, and its loss'—

'Say theft, not loss!' interrupted the baronet with unwonted harshness. 'I make no doubt that the letter was stolen from my desk in the library, on which I had left it for but some two minutes, while I went to speak with my son in the White Room. The French window nearest to the fireplace was open, giving an easy means of entry, as of egress, for the purloiner of this letter, who must have been on the watch for an opportunity of surprising my secrets—that is to say; stammered Sir Sykes, who felt the imprudence of these last words—of basely prying into my private correspondence.'

'Are you quite, quite sure, papa dear,' pleaded Blanche, 'that you left the letter there, instead of bestowing it in some safe place for safe keeping, which may afterwards have escaped your memory, and will presently be recollected? Such things have happened often and often, even to the most methodical, and'

'There, there, my girl!' broke in the baronet peevishly. 'Have I not heard that argument repeated *ad nauseam* by every man and maid that I have questioned; and is it not the stock answer to all inquiries after missing trinkets or valuables unaccounted for? I grant that I can prove nothing. If I could'—

He did not complete the sentence, but crushing down the wrath that almost choked his voice, turned away. Nothing, at this unpleasant conjuncture, could be in better taste, or more simple, than Ruth's demeanour. She began to cry. It was the first time since the day of her arrival that any one at Carbury had seen her in tears, and now both Blanche and Lucy came kindly to kiss her and console her with whispered entreaties to excuse Sir Sykes for an indiscriminate anger which there was much to palliate. But Ruth soon dried her eyes, and going up to her guardian laid her hand upon his arm and looked up timidly in his face.

'Let me be useful,' she said. 'Let me help in hunting high and low for this letter; pray, pray do, dear Sir Sykes, you who have been so very, very kind to me since I have been here.'

Nothing could be prettier. And Sir Sykes, though in his present irritable condition he actually shuddered at her light touch upon his arm, as though he had been in contact with a snake, was compelled to say a word or two of apology.

'I am greatly annoyed,' he said awkwardly, 'and have been unjust and inhospitable, I fear, and must ask you to forget my rudeness. I am best alone.'

Sir Sykes therefore withdrew, and for some time was seen no more; while Jasper, who had been an amused spectator of the turmoil, sauntered back to the White Room, muttering as he went: 'Lucky, rather, that this child had so perfect an ally, or the governor would have tried, convicted, and sentenced his only son and heir as the light-fingered captor of his lost property. A new sensation, it strikes me, that of injured innocence. And talking of that—how nicely Miss Ruth, be

she who she may, played her part—not one bit overdone—it was perfect! We breathe here an atmosphere of mystery; but it will be strange if, when I am all right again, I do not make a push to get at the governor's secret, whatever it may be.'

The letter, it need hardly be said, remained undiscovered by the volunteer searchers who undertook the quest of it; but gradually the indignant household became more calm, and the general voice confirmed the comfortable opinion, that Sir Sykes had unwittingly locked up the missing document in some desk or drawer, whence it would one day be satisfactorily extracted.

CURIOUS RESEARCHES INTO HUMAN CHARACTER.

THERE can be little doubt that the domain of mental science is being invaded on more than one side by the sciences which deal more especially with the material world and with the physical universe around us. When physiologists discovered that the force or impulse which travels along a nerve, which originates in the brain, and which represents the transformation of thought into action, is nearly allied to the electrical force—now one of man's most useful and obedient ministers—one avenue to the domain of mind was opened up. And when physiologists, through the aid of delicate apparatus, were actually enabled to measure the rate at which this nerve-force travels along the nerve-fibres, it may again be said that physical science was encroaching on the domain of mind, being in a certain sense thus enabled to measure the rapidity of thought.

A study, exemplifying in a more than ordinary degree the application of the methods of physical science to the explanation of states of mind, was brought under the notice of the members of the British Association at the last meeting of that body. In the department of Anthropology, or the science investigating the physical and mental constitution of the races of man, Mr Francis Galton, as president of this section, devoted his address to an exposition of the classification or arrangement of groups of men, according to their habits of mind, and their physiognomy.

Of the curious and absorbing nature of such a study nothing need be said. Lavater's method of pursuing the study of character through the investigation of the features of the human face has long been known. But Lavater's system is on the whole much too loose and elementary to be regarded as satisfactory by modern scientists, whose repudiation of phrenology as a system capable of explaining the exact disposition of the brain functions, has unquestionably affected Lavater's method also. Mr Galton refers at the outset of his address to the fact we have already alluded to—namely, that physiologists have determined the rate at which nerve-force, representing a sensation or impulse of thought and action, travels along the nerves. The common phrase 'as quick as thought' is found to be by no means so applicable as is generally supposed, especially when it is discovered that thought or nervous impulse, as compared with light or electricity, appears as a veritable laggard. For whilst light travels at the rate of many thou-

sands of miles—about one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles according to the latest researches—in a second of time, nerve-force in man passes along his nerves at a rate varying from one hundred and ten or one hundred and twenty to two hundred feet per second. Or, to use Mr Galton's words, nerve-force is 'far from instantaneous' in its action, and has 'indeed no higher velocity than that of a railway express train.'

As we could naturally suppose from a consideration of this fact, small animals presenting us with a limited distance for nerve-force to travel, will avoid rapid blows and shift for themselves in the struggle for existence at a much quicker rate than large animals. Take two extreme cases in illustration of this fact. A mouse hears a suspicious or threatening sound, and at once, so to speak, accommodates its actions and movements to its protection. The ear of the mouse, as one of its 'gateways of knowledge,' is situated so close to the brain that the interval which elapses between the reception of the sound by the ear, or between its transmission as an impulse to the brain and the issue of a command or second impulse from the brain to the muscles of the body for the purpose of movement, is too short to be perfectly appreciated by the observer. In a whale, on the contrary, which may attain a length of eighty feet, a much longer interval will elapse before action of body follows on nervous impulse, seeing that the nerve-impulse has a longer distance to travel. Assuming that in such animals as the whales the nerve-action travels at the rate of seventy or eighty feet per second, it follows that in a large whale which has been struck near the tail by a harpoon, a second or so will elapse before the impulse is transmitted to the brain, whilst another second will pass before the second impulse is sent from the brain to put the muscles of the tail in action for the purpose of retaliating upon the harpooner. In such a case it is assumed that the brain of the animal will be the nervous centre or station at which information is received, and from which instructions are in turn telegraphed to the various organs and parts of the body. In the actual details of the case, however, it is probable that the spinal marrow of the animal or some part of it would act as the 'head-office' for receiving and issuing commands. We know that a headless frog will wipe off with one foot a drop of vinegar that has been placed on the other, and in the absence of the brain we thus assume that the spinal cord may act as a nerve-centre.

Doubtless the spinal marrow discharges this function naturally; and in view of this latter supposition, the interval between the reception of a blow and the muscular actions of an animal would be of less duration than in the case we have just supposed, where the brain is regarded as the central station of the nervous system. As an eminent authority in physical science has remarked, 'the interval required for the kindling of consciousness would probably more than suffice for the destruction of the brain by lightning, or even by a rifle-bullet. Before the organ (that is, the brain) can arrange itself, it may therefore be destroyed, and in such a case we may safely conclude that death is painless.'

But confining ourselves to the domain of human thought, it seems perfectly clear that the differences between persons of different temperament are

in reality referable in great part to the varying rates at which nervous impulses are transmitted through the nerves, and to or from the brain. The difference between a person of phlegmatic disposition and a person of sanguine temperament, may thus be properly enough referred to the varying rates with which sensations and feelings are appreciated and acted upon. Disposition or temperament thus becomes referred, secondarily, to the manner in which and aptitude with which nerves receive and transmit impressions. Primarily, of course, we must refer the exact causes of the quicker or slower transmission of impulses to the constitution of the individual who exhibits them.

Mr Galton gives a very interesting example of the differences to be observed between various individuals in the respects just noted, by a reference to a practice common amongst astronomers. He says: 'It is a well-known fact that different observers make different estimates of the exact moment of the occurrence of any event. There is,' he continues, 'a common astronomical observation in which the moment has to be recorded at which a star that is travelling athwart the field of view of a fixed telescope, crosses the fine vertical wire by which that field of view is intersected. In making this observation it is found that some observers are over-sanguine and anticipate the event, whilst others are sluggish, and allow the event to pass by before they succeed in noting it.' This tendency of each individual is clearly not the result either of inexperience or carelessness; since, as astronomers well know, 'it is a persistent characteristic of each individual, however practised in the art of making observations or however attentive he may be.' And so accustomed indeed are astronomers to these differences in observers, that a definite and standing phrase—that of the 'personal equation'—is used in that science to express the difference between the time of a man's noting the event and that of its actual occurrence. Every assistant in an observatory has his 'personal equation' duly ascertained, and has this correction applied to each of his observations. This most interesting fact relates exact or mathematical science in the most curious manner to the mental character of an individual. Mr Galton, however, does not rest merely with the announcement of this latter result. He goes much further in his theoretical inquiry, and suggests that peculiarities in the respect just noted might be found to be related to special points in the conformation of the body. Thus could the 'personal equations' of astronomers be related to the height of body, age, colour of hair and eyes, weight, and temperament, some valuable facts might be deduced regarding the union of definite characters to form a special constitution.

Some other methods may be cited of estimating the differences between various temperaments in appreciating sensations and in acting upon them. If a person is prepared to give an instantaneous opinion as to the colour of a certain signal—black or white—but is unaware of the particular colour which is to be exhibited, and if he is further instructed to press a stop with his right hand for the one colour and a left-hand stop for the other, the act of judgment necessary to determine the particular stop in each instance, is found to occupy an appreciable interval. This is parti-

cularly the case if a single signal has been previously shewn, and the observer's quickness of sight has been tested and calculated by his pressing a single stop whenever he saw the object. The comparison between the interval elapsing between the mere sensation of sight and the act of pressing the stop in the latter case, and the interval which elapses when the observer has to make up his mind as to the difference between two signals, is seen to be very marked.

Setting thus before his mind a certain number of tests of individual temperament and character such as have been illustrated, the observer may next proceed to the task of discovering whether persons who exhibit similar qualities of mind in these experiments, can be proved to be related to each other in other particulars of their physical or mental disposition. Mr Galton has ingeniously suggested that by an arrangement of mirrors, four views of a person's head might be taken at once, and would thus afford an ordinary photographic portrait, a portrait of a three-quarter face, a profile view, and a figure of the top of the head respectively. Such a series of views would present all the aspects required for a comparison of the general as well as special contour of the head of the individual with the heads of others photographed in like manner.

Our author, whose researches on the heredity of men of genius and the transmission from one generation to another of qualities belonging to the highest development of man's estate, are well known, turned his attention to the opposite phase of human life and character, and investigated in an avowedly casual, but still important manner, the likenesses and differences between members of the criminal classes of England. The social and practical importance of a study such as the present may be readily estimated. There are few persons who have not considered the bearings and influence of criminal antecedents upon the offenders of the present day. Although to a very large extent our temperaments and dispositions are of our own making, and are susceptible of the favouring influences of education and moral training, there can be no doubt of the truth of the converse remark, that to a very great extent the traits of character we inherit from our parents exercise an undeniable influence over us for weal or for woe. If, therefore, through research in the direction we have indicated, it can be shewn that criminality runs in types, our notions of criminal responsibility, and our ideas regarding the punishment, deterrent and otherwise, of the criminal classes, must be affected and ameliorated thereby.

That criminality, like moral greatness, 'runs in the blood,' there can be no doubt. It would in fact be a most unwonted violation of the commonest law of nature, were we to find the children of criminals free from the moral taints of their parents. As physical disease is transmissible, and as the conditions regulating its descent are now tolerably well ascertained, so moral infirmities pass from one generation to another, and the 'law of likeness' is thus seen to hold true of mind as well as of body. Numerous instances might be cited of the transmission of criminal traits of character, often of very marked and special kind. Dr Despine, a continental writer, gives one very remarkable case illustrating the transmission from one generation to another of an extraordinary

tendency to thieve and steal. The subjects of the memoir in question were a family named Chrétien, of which the common ancestor, so to speak, Jean Chrétien by name, had three sons, Pierre, Thomas, and Jean-Baptiste. Pierre in his turn had one son, who was sentenced to penal servitude for life for robbery and murder. Thomas had two sons, one of whom was condemned to a like sentence for murder; the other being sentenced to death for a like crime. Of the children of Jean-Baptiste, one son (Jean-François) married one Marie Tauré, who came of a family noted for their tendency to the crime of incendiarism. Seven children were born to this couple with avowedly criminal antecedents on both sides. Of these, one son, Jean-François, named after his father, died in prison after undergoing various sentences for robberies. Another son, Benoist, was killed by falling off a house-roof which he had scaled in the act of theft; and a third son, 'Clain' by nickname, after being convicted of several robberies, died at the age of twenty-five. Victor, a fourth son, was also a criminal; Marie-Beine, a daughter, died in prison—as also did her sister Marie-Rose—whither both had been sent for theft. The remaining daughter Victorine, married a man named Lemur, the son of this couple being sentenced to death for robbery and murder.

This hideous and sad record of whole generations being impelled, as it were, hereditarily to crime, is paralleled by the case of the notorious Jukes-family, whose doings are still matters of comment amongst the legal and police authorities of New York. A long and carefully compiled pedigree of this family shews the sad but striking fact, that in the course of seven generations no fewer than five hundred and forty individuals of Jukes blood were included amongst the criminal and pauper classes. The account appears in the Thirty-first Annual Report of the Prison Association of New York (1876); and the results of an investigation into the history of the fifth generation alone, may be shortly referred to in the present instance as presenting us with a companion case to that of the somewhat inaptly named Chrétien family. This fifth generation of the Jukes tribe sprang from the eldest of the five daughters of the common ancestor of the race. One hundred and three individuals are included in this generation; thirty-eight of these coming through an illegitimate grand-daughter, and eighty-five through legitimate grand-children. The great majority of the females consorted with criminals: sixteen of the thirty-eight have been convicted—one nine times—some of heinous crimes: eleven are paupers and led dissolute or criminal lives: four were inveterate drunkards: the history of three is unknown; and a small minority of four are known to have lived respectable and honest lives. Of the eighty-five legitimate descendants, only five were incorrigible criminals, and only some thirteen were paupers or dissolute. Jukes himself, the founder of this prolific criminal community, was born about 1730, and is described as a curious unsteady man of gipsy descent, but apparently without deliberately bad or intently vicious instincts. Through unfavourable marriages, the undecided character of the father ripened into the criminal traits of his descendants. The moral surroundings being of the worst description, the beginnings of criminality

became intensified, and hence arose naturally, and as time passed, the graver symptoms of diseased morality and criminal disposition.

The data upon which a true classification of criminals may be founded are as yet few and imperfect, but Mr Galton mentions it as a hopeful fact, that physiognomy and the general contour of the head can be shewn to afford valuable evidence of the grouping of criminals into classes. This method of investigation, however, it must be noted, is by no means a return to the old standing of phrenology, which, as all readers know, boasts its ability to mark out the surface of the brain itself into a large number of different faculties. The most that anthropologists would contend for, according to the data laid down, is, that certain general types of head and face are peculiar to certain types of criminals. Physical conformation of a general kind becomes thus in a general manner related to the mental type.

The practical outcome of such a subject may be readily found in the ultimate attention which morality, education, and the state itself, may give to the reclaiming of youthful criminals and to the fostering, from an early period in their history, of those tendencies of good which even the most degraded may be shewn to possess. If it be true that we are largely the products of past time, and that our physical and mental constitutions are in great measure woven for us and independently of us, it is none the less a stable fact, that there exists a margin of free-will, which, however limited in extent, may be made in the criminal and debased, and under proper training and encouragement, the foundation of a new and better life.

MONSIEUR HOULOT.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.—TO-DAY—TROUBLE.

WINTER came and passed away without anything happening to break the even tenor of existence. Spring came, and with spring the appearance of a new novel of Mr Collingwood Dawson. Having had a considerable share in its manufacture, I felt naturally anxious to know the result of its appearance. I had an encouraging note from Mrs Collingwood Dawson: 'Much liked—goes off very well:' and I saw from the advertisements in the papers that the notices of the press were generally favourable. At the head of them all was the following extract from the *Hebdomadal Review*: 'High capacity—very good—many readers—enticing interest.' Tributes of appreciation that were valuable from a periodical rarely given to praise overmuch any one unconnected with the house it represents.

Soon after I had another note from my employer: 'I am coming over to confer with you on literary and other matters; please make all necessary arrangements. I shall be accompanied by a female friend, but not, alas, by Mr Collingwood Dawson.'

The steamer that plies the Lower Seine in the summer months, came puffing up the river one fine breezy morning, and dropped into a little boat that put off to meet her, two female passengers, a quantity of boxes, and a little white dog. I recognised my expected visitors, and hastened

down to the landing-place to meet them. I explained that my house was not big enough to take them in; but that I had secured rooms at the hotel close by, and that my wife and I hoped to have as much of their society as they could give us.

After they had settled down in their new abode, Mrs Collingwood Dawson came over to see me, and was shewn into the pavilion.

'I am in a good deal of doubt and difficulty,' she said; 'and I have come to ask your opinion and discuss matters with you. But as it is no use putting half-confidence in you, and your opinion will be of little good unless you know fully all the circumstances of the case, I mean to tell you everything; and will first begin, if you please, and if it does not bore you too much, with a little sketch of my life.'

I assured her that I should have great pleasure in listening to her, as anything connected with her was of interest to me.

'I am,' she began, 'the daughter of an official of the old India House; and my father, who had held a good position there, and enjoyed a good income, left at his death no other provision for his widow and only child, myself, but the pensions to which we were entitled—a very handsome one indeed for my mother; and for myself some seventy pounds a year, which ceased at my marriage. He had been during his lifetime very fond of good society, especially literary society; and thus from early years I had been acquainted with many people who followed that profession. Consequently it is not surprising that I tried to add to an income sufficiently narrow by literary work, although I confess that I had no particular talent, and certainly no enthusiasm for the task, and met with little success. In this way I became acquainted with several publishers and many authors; among others was my first husband. He was a man of great intellectual power and force of will, but quite without any ballast of judgment or common-sense. Still I was very much enthralled by his influence, and he having formed a violent passion for me, insisted on marrying me. Young and ill-advised, I gave way to his impetuosity, and married we were. I soon had cause to repent the hasty step. He had been a man of most irregular habits; and after a brief period of devotion to me, he resumed them. Our household became a scene of constant jars and quarrels; he wearied out my life, and I must have wearied out his. The beautiful soul that I thought I had recognised as enshrined in his somewhat ill-formed and stunted figure, had no existence for me. He was malignant and detestable, utterly—most utterly.'

Her voice trembled with anger at the retrospect, whilst her eyes filled with indignant tears.

'It was an ill-assorted match evidently,' I said. 'But why did you not agree to separate?'

'I shrank from mentioning such a thing; with all his faults, I believed that he was still at the bottom devotedly attached to me. Besides, such a step is always distressing and compromising. No; I went on bearing my troubles, not silently indeed, for I have too much spirit, I confess, to make a meek and uncomplaining wife; but I bore them anyhow, although I confess that any affection I ever had for him had been lost in the embroilments of our married life. You may think that I was to blame, and that if there were a real

attachment on his part towards me, I ought to have been able to manage him; but I tell you no! There was a certain malignity in his nature that made him spiteful and tormenting even to those whom he loved. Anyhow life was a sorrowful burden to me whilst he was with me.

She rose, looking quite overcome by the recital of her troubles. Her eyes were filled with tears; her hands trembled nervously, as she raised them to press the hair back from her forehead. I murmured a few words expressive of sympathy and good-will.

'Well!' she said, sitting down and wiping her eyes with a pretty embroidered handkerchief; 'not to dwell upon my troubles. I was at last relieved from the hateful knot by his death—a death I believe he contrived in a way that should leave me in as cruel and doubtful a position as possible. He left home one day without giving me any intimation that he would stay away—that was his general practice—or leaving me any money to carry on the household expenses. And the next thing I heard of him was from a little village on the coast, that he had been drowned while bathing. I believe that he committed suicide. I ascertained that he had been informing himself most minutely of the set of the tides and currents about the coast, and with fiendish ingenuity had taken to the water at a time when the tide was certain to carry his body far out to sea.'

'But what object could he have had in that, madam?'

'Don't you see? The pension which I had lost in marrying revived on my widowhood. But he had contrived that his body should never be found. In vain I applied to the authorities to renew my pension. "There had been several cases of attempted personation and fraud about these pensions, and they utterly refused to renew mine without absolute proof of my husband's death. This I was unable to afford to their satisfaction, his body never having been discovered. Still the circumstantial evidence was most strong, and I was advised to bring an action in the way of a petition of right. A circumstance, however, occurred," said the widow with a slight blush, 'which rendered such a step unnecessary.'

'Ah! I see,' I cried; 'you married again?'

'Yes; and this time my venture was more fortunate. My second husband was an officer in the army, frank and free and brave. No young couple could have been happier. But alas! we were neither of us prudent in the management of our affairs. We had small means in the present, but great expectations, and we were too sanguine to think of the possibility of disappointment. Life became a series of feasts and fêtes. My husband sold out of the army, and we lived gaily enough on the proceeds of his commission, till that was all gone, and we saw ourselves brought to the verge of ruin. I must tell you that my husband was also of a literary turn, and wrote military sketches and so on, that brought in a little money, but nothing substantial.

'We had one resource still left—the house in which we lived; it had been my mother's, and at her death she left it to me. It was a pretty little house in the neighbourhood of St John's Wood; but it was leasehold only, and the lease had not more than ten years to run. We had found it under these circumstances impossible to mortgage

our interest. We might have sold the lease; and that with the furniture, which had also been my mother's, would have realised five or six hundred pounds. But when that was gone, where should we look for shelter? Charles's great expectations—'

'Pardon me for interrupting you. You have mentioned your husband's Christian name: it will make your narrative clearer if you tell me also his surname.'

'Collingwood was his name—Charles Collingwood.'

'And the name of the first one was Dawson?'

'You have guessed rightly. To continue. Charles's great expectations had all come to a bad end. A rich relative, who had brought him up for his heir, took a great dislike to me, and cut him out of his will, for no reason in the world but that he had married me, and that we were very poor. When he died, and we found this out, it seemed that the world had come to an end for us. What was to be done? Live in the most niggardly way we might, but we could not live on nothing. First we began to sell the less essential parts of our belongings. We lived on old china for three months; and then we began on our paintings. We had some good ones by English artists, which my father had left behind him, and these kept us for a while. But this was like burning the planks of the ship to keep the engines going. Charles had tried hard for employment in the meantime. For the governorship of a colony; for a consulship; the post of adjutant of militia; the same thing in a Volunteer regiment; for the chief-constableness of a large town; for the management of a brewery; and ever so many things besides. All of no use.

'We must take in washing," said Charles; "and I will become a second Mantlini, and turn the mangle."

'Lodgers were our next thought, and that seemed more feasible. Then some one advised us to let our house furnished. We put an advertisement in the papers, and by great good luck we had an offer for the whole of the house at once. Six guineas a week for May, June, and July. We made up our minds to take cheap lodgings somewhere on the coast, and spend only half our weekly six guineas, which would thus last us six months instead of three. As we were packing up our belongings and storing away the packages in the lumber-room, Charles stumbled over a lot of old boxes, from which arose a cloud of dust.

'What are these old things?' he cried.

'I don't know anything about them. They were my first husband's books and papers.'

'Books, eh?' said Charles. 'Let's have a look at 'em;' and broke open one of the boxes. This, however, turned out to be full of packets of manuscripts. Charles made a wry face over them, but he took out a packet and began to read it. I went on with the work. I had everything to do then, I must tell you, for we had dismissed our servants, and lived in the house by ourselves with only a char-woman to help—quite in picnic style.

'Well dinner-time came, and Charles, who was still up-stairs reading his manuscript, brought it down with him and laid it beside his plate, and went on again reading directly after dinner.

'I tell you what it is, old woman," he said, as we went to bed. "I feel maddled with it all, and rather as if I'd been supping off pork chops

and Welsh-rabbit; but there's something in that fellow's writings, only they are coarse, decidedly coarse."

'But I am tiring you,' said Mrs Collingwood, looking up with a smile.

'Not at all. I am highly interested. Go on, please.'

'We went away to the sea-side, and Charles took several packets of manuscript with him to amuse him, as he said, during the long days.

"Do you know," he said to me one evening, "I think one could make something out of these things. If we cut out the objectionable passages which I expect were in the way of their publication—"

"My dear Charles," I said, "these were his religion, and he would not have touched a word for worlds to make them more acceptable."

"And died a martyr to the faith, eh?" said Charles. "Well, I shan't be so very particular. There's enough for a three-volume novel here, and I shall expurgate it and try its luck."

'Charles was never much of a penman, but I was a neat quick writer, and thus the copying fell upon me. Charlie did the botching and patching, and dictated as I copied. But what a task it was! I am sure the mere writing of it was worth all we were destined to get for it, let alone the author's work and our amendments. Then we got a lot of the most taking three-volume novels from the library, and counted the words and lines, so as to get ours about the right length. It was finished at last, just as our house became vacant; and as soon as we got back to town I took it to a publisher. It was agreed that I was to do all this part of the work, for my poor Charlie used to say that if anything happened to him, I should find the use of these habits of business! Here she paused.

I coughed doubtfully. My knowledge of human nature led me to attribute the arrangement to shyness and laziness on his part. I did not, however, venture to disturb Mrs Collingwood's illusions.

She resumed: 'To our surprise and joy, after a delay of not more than three or four months, we heard from the publishers accepting our novel. We did not get any large sum for it, it is true, but it was highly thought of, and was to be well advertised; and that was the chief point. Whenever the author was inquired for, I gave out that he was my husband, but that he was an invalid. Charlie really was poorly at the time,' she said blushing. 'Ah, you shake your head; but in these days, my dear M——, it is necessary to be *ruse* as well as clever.'

'But why not have given it out as the work of a deceased author?'

'Ah, that would never have done! A publisher takes a first novel because he hopes for another and a better. Of what use is it to puff the one golden egg of a dead goose? No; we were right there—events have shewn it. Well, our novel was, as you know, a success. It went off like wild-fire, and our publishers fed the flame adroitly by issuing one edition after another—all of the same impression. All this time we were at work upon another, which also went down, although not so much relished as the first. I think we had purified it a little too much. Avoiding this error in a third, we again made a hit. Our fortune was now made and publishers were at our feet. But we were in this strait: we had come to an end of our finished

works; all that were left now were mere sketches and outlines, many too vague, and others too extravagant to be of much use to us. Charles had good judgment and some critical power, but he had no creative faculty, neither had I. Happily we did not deceive ourselves on this point. The question to be solved was how to supply the want. To Charles the idea first suggested itself of trying to secure assistance from outside. It was quite evident that it would be useless to think of any person well known in the world of letters. We set ourselves to study the more obscure literature of the day.'

I bowed politely, but with some inward mortification.

'Oh, don't think *you* are in question now,' said the lady with an arch smile; 'wait to the end of the story. My husband came home one day in a state of great excitement. He had in his pocket a copy of the *Weekly Dredger*, which contained an instalment of a serial story just commenced.

"Read that," he cried. When I had finished: "Now, what do you think?"

'But I was trembling all over with terror.

"What's the matter?" he cried.

"O Charles!" I said, "if I did not know it was impossible, I should say that no one but my late husband could have written this."

'So strongly was I penetrated with this idea, that for a long time I forbade him to make any inquiry after the author. At last we were so pressed to supply another novel that I consented that he should make inquiries. The story in the *Weekly Dredger*, we found, had become so grotesque and bizarre, that finally the editor brought it to an abrupt close himself, refusing to take any more of it; and he made no difficulty whatever about telling our business agent in confidence the name of the writer. I must tell you we had found it necessary to employ an agent, Mr Smith, who has served us faithfully enough, but who was never permitted to see my husband. Well, Charles wrote cautiously to the author of this queer story, who, it seemed, lived in France; asking him to send specimens of his stories, and specifying the quantity required for possible publication, with his terms. We had in reply a pile of manuscript. Judge of the relief I felt when I found that the handwriting was quite unfamiliar to me. His terms were so low that we had no difficulty in undertaking to accept all his work. For some seventy pounds a year we secured everything he wrote. A great deal of the stuff was utterly useless to us, but every now and then he gave us the framework of a powerful story. Well, all of a sudden he turns sulky and refuses to send any more. Charlie would have found some one to supply his place, no doubt. But now I come to the great misfortune of my life!—with faltering voice—'the death of my dear husband.'

'Your husband dead!' I cried, quite unprepared for the announcement.

'Yes, he is dead; and unhappy me, I have not been able to mourn his loss except in secret and with precautions. The funeral even was conducted with as much caution as if he had been a felon, and we had been ashamed of having to own that he had belonged to us. And he was the kindest, most affectionate—'

'But it was his own wish,' she went on after a pause. 'He planned out everything. You see

that although our writings—compilations should I call them?—she said with a faint attempt at a smile—brought us in a nice income, yet we were pleasure-loving people, and had always been accustomed to plenty of society, and we had saved nothing out of it. We have two children, a boy at Rugby, and a daughter at an expensive school; and there is poor Charlie's sister, the lady who accompanies me, and she has no one else to depend upon but me. Besides, as Charlie urged before he died: "I am not Collingwood Dawson," he said; "why should my death be the cause of his? Keep him alive, old woman, to be a support to you and the children and Lizzie." Those were almost his last words, dear brave fellow!" She rose and left the room, overcome by uncontrollable emotion.

My thoughts, after Mrs Collingwood quitted me, were rather of a serious turn. I reflected that my own interests were bound up in the same cause, and that my own livelihood hung very much upon keeping up Mr Collingwood Dawson as a going concern. It was too late to go back now. I had gained experience I had lost connection. My own place had been filled up. Mr Collingwood Dawson had become as necessary to me as to the widow and her family. Still the idea of a person who never died, who enjoyed a sort of corporate existence, or like the living Buddha, transferred his identity from one body to another, a being who could go on writing novels and publishing them till the crack of doom, struck one with a kind of awe.

As a relief to the troubled current of my thoughts I took up a newspaper which Mrs Collingwood had brought with her. It was the *Hobdonaal Review*, the number containing the review of Collingwood Dawson's last novel. If I turned to the page with a kind of pleased excitement, for the short abstract that I had seen in the advertisement, as you have seen, was calculated to give me the impression that the critique was an appreciative one. It was so short that I have no scruple in giving it *in extenso*: 'If it be necessary, and we suppose it is, that silly ill-educated people should be supplied with the morbid trash suited to their high capacity, there is no reason why Mr Collingwood Dawson should not cater for their wants. We can say of his novel that it is very good stuff of the kind. The pity is that there should be so many readers for this kind of stuff. We only hope that young ladies of the class who find Mr Dawson's compilations acceptable, will not be unduly led away from the paramount claims of seam and gusset and band by the enticing interest of his story.'

Satire like this does not hit very hard, however, and my only feeling after the first disappointment was of amusement at the ingenuity that had been able to extract the sting from it and secure the latent humor. One word, however, seemed dangerous—"compilations." Was it possible that the critic had discovered the composite nature of Mr Collingwood Dawson?

"Can you lend me five pounds?" said a gruff voice behind me. I turned and saw the squat figure of M. Houlot close to my chair.

It was an embarrassing question. There was nothing in M. Houlot's appearance to invite confidence—at all events to the extent of five pounds. At the same time, M. Houlot had in my mind loomed into considerable importance, for since I

had heard Mrs Collingwood's story, I had identified him with the third portion of Mr Collingwood Dawson.

"Oh, if it requires consideration, don't think about it," said Houlot roughly. "I won't trouble you."

"Stop a minute," I replied; "wait. I don't know whether I have the money. I must ask my wife."

"Oh, you are one of the wretched slaves of a petticoat, are you?" said Houlot with a rasping laugh. "I should have thought you had lived through that stage of your development."

'As she will be the principal sufferer if the money should not be returned, she is entitled to a voice in the matter.'

'Look here! If it comes to asking your wife, I'll withdraw my request. I know what that means, well enough. But if you are afraid of not getting your money back, I'll give you security.'

—What security? Why, manuscripts worth ten, twenty pounds. I should say, if I were some people—of priceless value?

'Ah!' I said to myself, there is Houlot, who has quarrelled with his bread-and-butter, and now he comes to me to borrow money to go on with. Would it not be better to send for Mrs Collingwood, to see if this is really the man who supplies her with her plots; and if so, to make the peace between them, and get him to continue the supply?

Mrs Collingwood saved me the trouble of sending for her. I saw her coming across the garden to the pavilion. She was composed now and cheerful; she led one of my girls by the hand, and was telling her a story, I fancy, in which the child seemed uncommonly interested.

Houlot was standing leaning against the mantelpiece with his back to the doorway, and under his arm his stick, which he was rubbing with the point of his hook, as was his custom when vexed. I saw Mrs Collingwood coming in at the doorway—door and windows were wide open. All of a sudden her face whitened all over, and she tottered backwards. I ran to her assistance; but when I reached the garden, she had already disappeared within the house.

'Am I a hobgoblin, that I frighten people?' said Houlot savagely, coming to the door. 'Where's that woman you run away?'

I made no reply; and he went on rubbing his stick with the iron hook, apparently in a very evil temper.

'I want that money particularly. I want to go to England and expose this Collingwood Dawson, to strip him of his borrowed plumes, and shew the British public what a daw this fellow is whom they admire. Come; give me this five pounds, and let me go.'

'I can't say anything more to you just now,' I replied. 'I will let you know to-morrow.'

'That will lose me two days; I want to start to-morrow.'

'I can't help it. I can't let you have the money now.'

Houlot saw that I was in some flurry and confusion, and thought probably that I was afraid of him, and that by bullying me a little he should get what he wanted.

'Come now!' he cried; 'go and get me that money. I know what I know, and I am not to be stopped for a paltry five-pound note.'

My reply was to shew him the door. He scowled at me, fingered his stick as if he had a mind to hit me, thought better of it seemingly, and went out growling inarticulately.

'Where is he, that man?' cried Mrs Collingwood meeting me in the doorway of the house, looking quite livid with fear. 'What do you know of him? Where does he come from?'

'He is your correspondent, the author of your plots.'

'Ah, then is he my husband!' she cried in a voice that, though low and subdued, was full of anguish. 'What a wretched being am I, to have seen him!'

'It would have been worse still had he seen you,' I muttered. 'Come, Mrs Collingwood—come into the garden, into the open air; you will be better there. Take my arm; keep up your heart; all will be well yet.'

'Where is he? where is he?' was all she could say.

'He is gone; you are quite safe.'

We began to pace up and down the garden together, she wringing her hands and writhing with pain and emotion.

'Do consider,' I said, 'that he has kept out of the way all these years, and that he is not likely to trouble you now.'

'Oh! I can't bear to think. The children—poor Charlie, what will become of us all?'

'The children will take no harm,' I said, 'if you act prudently. All will be well; and your late husband is out of the reach of any trouble.'

'Ah yes, poor Charlie! I wish I had died with him. Even now he may be reproaching me! How dreadful, dreadful it all is!'

I could not give her much consolation; for besides these troubles of the heart, other and less manageable difficulties I saw were impending.

At the first blush it was impossible to say what would become of us all in this imbroglio. Certainly if any one were entitled to be considered Collingwood Dawson, it was the man who had originated the works by which he had obtained his fame. On the other hand, he would never have had any success himself. No publisher would have looked twice at books which were so violent and coarse. All the labour and pains that had been taken in bringing his writings into an acceptable form, were they to go for nothing? And was it to be allowed that a man who had thrown off all ties and abandoned his place in the world, should resume them when other people had made them worth possessing? It seemed not; and yet the law would be on his side.

There was only one consoling feature in the position—the man had no money. He could not move without that; and if he had been able to obtain it from any other source, he would hardly have come to borrow from a stranger; but this was a very frail barrier after all. He might, if he were determined to get back to England, find his way to the nearest port, and get passed home by the consul as a distressed British subject. Why he had not gone over to England when he first discovered the use that had been made of his talents, was probably because he waited to complete some work he had in hand, which might serve as an introduction to the publishers, and a sort of voucher for his claim.

Was there, however, no possibility of mistake?

Was it perfectly certain that this was the missing husband? Mrs Collingwood had no hope that there was any error. She knew him perfectly. It was impossible that there should be two such people in the world together, identical in mind and in person. That his handwriting had so completely changed, seemed to her unaccountable; but it did not move her faith in his identity. And an explanation was soon found for this; for he had lost his right hand since his flight, and consequently wrote with his left.

I said just now that I could give Mrs Collingwood no comfort; but there was one thing that bound us all together and insured sympathy between us: we were so to speak all in the same boat. Our livelihood depended upon keeping up the integrity of Collingwood Dawson.

A MOORLAND WEDDING.

It was in the month of June last year, when the days were about their longest, that the scattered dwellers in the upland parish of L— were excited by the intimation of a marriage in one of their glens. Among a sparse population an event of this sort necessarily happens but rarely, and as a consequence when it does happen it comes attended by much more 'pomp and circumstance' than would otherwise accompany it. As an angel sent by some gracious fate, it stirs the stagnant pool of existence, and revives hearts that may have drooped through dreary days of solitude. The people who have participated in it are livelier in their talk and wear a blither aspect for days and weeks afterwards.

A breeze was blowing through the bright June sunlight, and the shadows of a few clouds were moving quietly across the hills, when about three o'clock in the afternoon I set out on foot for the scene of the marriage that has been referred to. The point from which I started lay upon the highest tract of cultivated land at the head of a prettily wooded valley, and I had to walk seven miles by mountain-side and glen before reaching the cottage that was my destination. For the first portion of the way there is an excellent cart-road—excellent for a hill-country whose pastoral-bred pedestrians do not greatly need roads; but after some three miles have been got over the traveller finds himself almost literally at large among the mountains, with but a feeble indication of a foot-track along the brow of a deep ravine, and a mountain stream below.

Continuing my course, the glen began to expand again, and its slopes to lose their covering of brushwood. A strip of level verdure, broadening as I ascended, stretched on each side of the water; and after following several windings of the stream without any change in the character of its banks, the moorland cottage that I was in search of lay before me.

The first thing I observed was an animated crowd of people streaming out of the door two and two, and setting off for an elevation that stood some distance to the right. On arriving at the cottage I learned that these were the bride's people gone to meet the party of the bridegroom, and to take part in 'running the brose,' which is a foot-race among the young lads for the bride's-maid's handkerchief. Herself the goal, the bride's-maid, fluttering in white and scarlet, had ascended

to a knoll before the cottage, and some time afterwards held up a silk handkerchief to the eyes of the expectant runners.

I fancy there are few spectacles that produce in one's mind a stronger sense of savage freedom than that of civilised human beings let loose, coatless, vestless, bonnetless, to race among the hills. In less than two minutes from their starting on the homeward race they had sunk out of view at the foot of the highest hill, and when they halted in sight again, they were much more widely scattered than at the beginning. Two or three in the rear had already dropped out of the race; but those in the front seemed to be still running with energy and determination. Once or twice again we lost them in the hollows, and each time they reappeared we could notice that their number was gradually getting smaller; so that by the time the leader swept across the stream in front of us, all other competitors had given up the contest as hopeless. A cheer broke forth as he struggled up the knoll panting and bemired to clutch the coveted prize, which, with similar ones thus gained, I find it is a great ambition among the young men in some districts to accumulate. The winner of the 'breeze' was a tall and finely formed youth of fair complexion; with clear blue eyes and well-cut features.

As soon as the stragglers had come forward, followed by the bridegroom and his man, amid tremendous cheering, the marriage ceremony was proceeded with in the kitchen. It was a long low-roofed apartment, with innumerable shoulders of mutton in all the stages towards ham, depending from the rafters. The bride was led out of an anteroom, resting on her father's arm. He was a rather oldish man, with the history of a good many troubles plainly written upon his face. The bride was a broad-shouldered, brown-visaged, and gray-eyed maiden of about four-and-twenty; and her future husband, a loose-limbed, amiable-looking youth in a lavender necktie and fiery red hair, looked possibly a year or two younger. The service was performed by a Presbyterian clergyman, and was accordingly a short one. Immediately it was over there was a multitudinous shaking of hands with the happy couple. It was interesting to note the various phraseologies in which the numerous guests severally expressed their good wishes; all the degrees of feelings from that of ordinary regard to the most exalted affection, being apparently represented.

While this process was going forward, the mother of the bride, a sallow-faced person with kindly black eyes, and gray hair smoothed neatly across her brow, took up a position by the fire to advance arrangements for the tea. You could see that the good woman was greatly excited and confused. Probably she had never had so many people under her humble roof before; and there were 'grand folk' among them too, the surrounding farmers and their families, for whose (comparatively) delicate palates she was quite unaccustomed to prepare food. Every now and then while proceeding with her duties, she would catch up the corner of her ample white apron, and wiping the perspiration from her forehead, would draw a long sigh, as of sadness or fatigue. The movements of the company around her seemed to attract her but little; all the evening she wore a preoccupied expression, and it was evident that she had within

her mind a picture of her own, on which her thoughts were dwelling. But what the scene was that was calling her away from the merriment of the hour I possessed no means of ascertaining; and the reader is at liberty to fill up this blank in the narrative as best delights his fancy.

A portion of the company now seated itself at a heavily laden tea-table that was laid out in an adjoining chamber; and here let me remark that as Scottish weddings are celebrated in the afternoon or evening, the entertainment known by the English as the *déjeuner*, is unknown to their northern neighbours. But there are few such teas served in cities or even in Lowland dwellings as had been that night prepared for us. The result of a good week's labour of several women in carrying, boiling, and baking, seemed to be placed upon the board. Let the reader remember that it was in Scotland that this wedding took place, and he will appreciate the bill of fare the better. It was by no means a much varied one, but the several articles had been provided in unlimited supply. Fresh baked scones lined each side of the table in castellated rows; platefuls of dark-coloured 'braxy' ham, cut from the mutton that hung on the rafters, stood in between them, with here and there a pile of thick cut, deeply buttered bread. There were also buns, 'cookies,' biscuits, and gimcracks, that must have been carried painfully over miles of moorland; and raised majestically at the head of the table was a little white bride-cake surmounted by a solitary flag.

When the company had crushed themselves into seats around the table, and were just going to operate upon the braxy, a big-boned, bleached-looking old man was furtively led on to the end of a bench that had been placed near the door. I soon discovered that, after the minister, this was for the time being the most important of the invited assembly. He was in fact no less a personage than the fiddler, and was, as he ought to have been, in keeping with the character of the traditional musician, almost stone-blind. This Demodoens had been led hither from his dwelling five miles over the hills by a little boy, his grandson, who had fair hair, and wore fadol velvet and corduroys. The heartiness with which the veteran musician laid in a store of victual against the labour of a long night's fiddling, was a most refreshing sight. He was a long-faced, heavy-jawed man, and had rusty gray hair that fell unkempt upon a much worn velvet collar. A large scarlet cotton handkerchief was twisted carelessly about his neck, and came down in a loose fold upon his breast. He wore an aspect of silent passive misfortune; and as you looked at him it was difficult to imagine music dwelling in his soul, how much soever it might dwell in his fiddle.

As soon as the tea was ended, or rather this first instalment of it, he was guided to an elevated seat that had been prepared for him in a corner of the kitchen, where he began scraping and preluding with his fiddle. To many of the lads and lasses this was the first intimation of the musician's presence; and it was the signal for a little preliminary coquetry with the eyes, while it lit up their honest faces with blushes and expectant smiles.

A Scottish wedding without a dance is next door to no wedding at all, so little time was lost in

stepping to the floor. There were Scotch reels, country-dances, and polkas, and now and then a quadrille was decorously walked through by the two or three young farmers and their sweethearts. But unquestionably the Scotch reel was the favourite, and maintained the precedence throughout the whole of the entertainment. As most readers doubtless know, this is a lively and stirring dance, that permits a good deal of jumping and stamping, and is admirably adapted to the social requirements of a warm-hearted and excitable people. Whether its popularity in Scotland has anything to do with the Celtic origin of the inhabitants, I do not take upon me to suggest; but certain it is, that after seeing it performed, as on the present occasion, with all the vivacity that belongs to it, you would not think of associating it with a grave and solemn-minded race. To the uninitiated onlooker it is nothing but an indistinguishable confusion; in which he may observe that there is a great deal of bobbing with the head and shuffling with the feet, and that it is in nowise adapted to a staid person of fashion. Nevertheless it stood in high favour on the present occasion, and seemed to please abundantly the agile young persons who performed in it. What matter to them though it should be unfashionable! They had come to this wedding to enjoy themselves; and much as the horrid crew in 'Alloway's auld haunted kirk' despised foreign cotillions, so did these children of hills and valleys stick to their native reels and country-dances.

After a time, when the music had begun to work in his soul, and he had been set a-thinking upon 'the brave days of old,' you would notice a reverend senior bravely leading out some gay and handsome maiden, and challenging another gray-headed veteran to face him in the dance. These exhibitions of pluck and spirit in the fathers uniformly evoked hearty plaudits from the company; and some one would call out to 'Archie' the fiddler, 'to put his best foot foremost this time.' Archie had by this time got worked into a state of considerable energy and enthusiasm, and was in some respects quite a different character from that of two hours ago at the tea-table. The colour had travelled back to his old withered cheek, and his features looked a deal more soft and flexible; his face and form seemed much more indicative of life; youth seemed to be coming back to him at the call of his own fiddle. It was interesting to observe as he became enthusiastic in his fiddling, how sympathetic was his every motion. How his rickety old legs crossed and bobbed up and down; the body in a tremble, and constant movement in the shoulders; while the head was perpetual motion, now hanging down upon his breast, now erect and turning on its socket, now thrown backwards, and such eyes as were in it—poor 'ruined orbs'—directed restlessly towards the ceiling. Archie's *tout ensemble* was a visible embodiment of the doctrine that music incites to motion.

Music has charms to stir the savage breast

no less than to 'soothe' it. Now and then the dancers would cease a while, and seated in benches round the room, would listen in silence to a song. A broad-faced, dull-eyed, young shepherd, with more energy than finish, sang *My Hielan' Hills*, and a dark pawky little man recited out of a

corner very slyly, *Rabbin Tamson's Smiddy*. The *Laird o' Cockpen, Why Left I my Hame?* and *Willie brewed a Peck o' Maut*, were also given; the last named being received with great enthusiasm. There was little culpable indulgence in whisky that I observed. This may have been owing to the judicious arrangements of the host for refreshing his guests during the evening with the national 'toddy' instead of the more potent undiluted spirit. Several times a tray was handed round, bearing piles of bread-and-cheese, and a large jug full of the resuscitating beverage; and though the latter in some cases was a little freely partaken of, there was no unseemly manifestation of its effects.

And thus, through the warm hours of that summer's night, with lonely hills listening in their dreams, the wedding festival of the shepherd's daughter glided merrily along. The sun had been already near two hours climbing up the east, and the pale morning light had once more shot its rays into many a glen and hollow, when these mountain merry-makers ceased their saturnalia. The evening before, they had assembled for the feast trim, fresh, rosy, and buoyant; and when the 'garish day' sent his mocking light through the narrow window-panes and shone upon the forms of the dancers, they looked rosy and buoyant still. The smoothness had departed from their hair and the aspect of freshness from their garments; frills and ribbons had been dragged awry; but the colour was as fresh in their cheeks, and their eyes were quite as lustrous as when eight hours before they had stamped and bobbed and 'hoosh'd' through their first Scotch reel. The most of them would tramp their half-dozen miles and more back over the hills, and go through the usual labours of the day with hardly a symptom of fatigue.

When all had come out of the cottage, and immediately before the separation, about three-fourths of the party congregating on the little knoll before the door where the bride's-maid had stood with the handkerchief on the previous evening, sent forth a long-drawn, far-reverberating cheer. Then followed a tumultuous shaking of hands, with many a kindly spoken farewell; and then finally they departed, each group on its own path, for their wide-scattered farms and cottages. Some days would pass during which the memory of the wedding would be continually in their thoughts, forming a mental picture that gave them solace in the midst of outward dreariness. But gradually the lines of the picture would lose their vividness, and it would be less frequently recurred to by the fancy, less fervently yearned after by the heart. Emotions that had been stirred by that night's entertainment would after a while subside again; the old duties would present themselves anew, calling for the old labour and attention; and harmony would be again established between the inward life and the outward circumstances.

The newly married couple had arranged to stay at the cottage till the afternoon, and then to set out for their future home, which lay in the adjoining parish, and about ten miles away. That parish in its whole extent was high-lying and pastoral; and therefore the dwelling to which they were going would be in every way as lonely as the one from which they were departing. From what I had noticed of the bride's mother, she would undoubtedly feel melancholy over the

losing of her daughter, the last that had remained with her out of five; and I can think of her that afternoon, when the two young people had left her, slipping out to the door, and having shaded her eyes with her hand, taking a far look at them as they passed out of her sight among the hills. Then she would walk pensively back into her now dull-looking kitchen, and perhaps ponder with some sadness about becoming old. The bride and bridegroom would arrive at their abode in the gray hours of the evening, where some relative would be waiting to receive them. It would be such another cottage as the one we have been visiting; and there, in the wide wilderness, untamed nature on every side of them, they would settle down to await the domesticities that fate might send.

Is there not something almost awe-striking in the thought of civilised human beings settling down to face perhaps half a century of life in solitudes like these, all unconscious of the mighty pulse-beats of the world they dwell in? It is to be presumed that this red-haired Briton who has just led home his bride across ten miles of moorland, possesses a fair share of practical energy and some fragments of intellect; he has the faculty of loving his fellow-men and of gaining happiness, perhaps also wisdom, from hours of bright social intercourse. If he were now plunged amid stimulating circumstances, a fine moral nature might possibly be developed by the time his years were through. But immured in this mountain fastness, away from human din, his mind will probably never be unfolded to the least self-conscious effort; and he will leave life at seventy little advanced in intellectual attainment on what he was at twenty-five. For although Nature is an open book, teeming over with wise and great lessons, it is only after toiling through initiatory stages of culture that we can intelligently read her book, or even believe that it exists. The unlettered shepherd nestling in her shaggy bosom, unless she has gifted him with genius, rarely dreams of the truths that she is symbolically publishing around him. And I think of the future life of him whose marriage we have been celebrating as something far different from that of a home-bred philosopher or poet. Performing his simple pastoral duties with honesty of purpose, I can still imagine his life to be monotonous, irksome, and stagnant; having in it many hours of idleness unilluminated by neighbourly greetings or the mystic gleams of intelligent research. As he goes his rounds in summer-time, he will see the wide stillness of morning upon the hills; in winter he will have to battle with the fury of the storm. The gleaming will find him cultivating an unfruitful garden, or gathering hay out of morasses for his cow, or sitting over his peat-fire knitting homespun stockings or reading legends of the Covenanters. Now and then a distant neighbour, leading a life as lonely as himself, or some wandering angler, will drop in upon him, and be treated to a hospitable meal. But he will hardly see another face the whole year through, except perchance on Sunday—until the 'clipping' season comes round, when he will be called away, now in one direction now in another, to days of social labour.

Some day, let us hope, a wee body will appear upon his hearth—his own offspring, to be loved, nourished, and instructed; and then probably there

will come another and another till a considerable family is grouped around him. The care and training of these children will be a kind of education to himself. The nursing of them will not fail to develop the womanliness of the wife. Let us hope that she may have much of a mother's happiness and little of a mother's sorrow, and that rosy health will be ever upon her hearth! May her boys grow up broad-shouldered and manly; may her girls be handsome, modest, and fair; and some day or other, a quarter of a century hence, may there be another moorland wedding, when those of us who have assisted at the present one, fiddler and dancers, writer and readers, shall be wearing away or perhaps gathered to 'the land o' the leal.'

EGG-CULTURE.

Why do we import seven or eight hundred million eggs every year, and pay two millions and a half sterling for them? The answer is, that the demand for eggs is steadily increasing, while the home produce is either lessening or stationary in amount.

Why the home supply does not advance with the increase of demand, is a question that calls for a little attention to the commercial aspects of farming. So many small holdings have been absorbed by large farms, that many a cottage housewife has been withdrawn from rural life who would otherwise have reared cottage poultry; neither the allotment-holder nor the artisan has range and space enough for rearing eggs to advantage.

In a trade journal called *The Grocer*, in which much information concerning the provision trades is given, the following remarks occur: 'If a due attention to details were given in this country, the stock of fowls which roam about the farmyard and gather corn from the thrashing, instead of being a mere adjunct and perquisite of the servants, would return sufficient to discharge the rental of many a small holding. Such, we have understood, has been the case where the experiment has been fairly tried; and once this becomes an established notion, our own supplies will increase in a greater ratio than they do at present. According to a competent authority, at this time—what with improved native and imported varieties—we possess the best stock of egg-layers in the world. In no country is the management of our best poultry-yards excelled. These should serve as a model for the rest; to bring up the wholesale results to their true national import a/c, all we require is an extension of the taste or poultry-farming amongst those who earn their living on the land.'

The real now-laid eggs of home produce are comparatively few. Their excellence is best appreciated by obtaining them at country farm-houses. The small farmers who do not take nor send their eggs to open market sell them to country shopkeepers, or barter them for other commodities. Many cottagers contrive to keep a few fowls; and where there is no pig, these fowls act as scavengers, consuming the scraps of the family, the outside cabbage-leaves, peelings of boiled potatoes, &c.; if the fowls are supplied

with a little corn, they will lay a good many eggs. This desultory mode of leaving poultry to find their food as best they may is, however, quite a mistake, and can never be adequately remunerative. Fowls, to pay, must be well looked after, and systematically fed and housed.

Ireland used to supply England with a considerable number of eggs, and perhaps may continue so to do; but statistical details of the trade between the two portions of the United Kingdom are not now published. About thirty years ago, fifty million eggs were annually shipped from Dublin alone to London and Liverpool, value about a hundred and twenty thousand pounds; the supply obtained from all Ireland very much exceeded this amount. Mr Weld, in his description of Roscommon about that period, noticed some of the features of the egg-trade in the rural districts of Ireland: 'The eggs are collected from the cottages for several miles round by runners, boys nine years old and upwards, each of whom has a regular beat which he goes over daily, bearing back the produce of his toil carefully stored in a small hand-basket. I have frequently met with these boys on their rounds; and the caution necessary for bringing their brittle ware with safety seemed to have communicated an air of business and steadiness to their manner unusual to the ordinary volatile habits of children in Ireland.'

But as we have said, a large supply from abroad has become a necessity; and the characteristics of this supply are worth knowing; because they shew that the trade can be conducted profitably without having recourse to artificial incubation or hatching—a system which has at times had many advocates in England.

The importation of French eggs into this country has increased in an almost incredible degree, owing in part to the facilities afforded by the commercial treaty between England and France. It has risen from about a hundred and fifty million to six or seven hundred million eggs annually, since the year 1860; while the value per thousand has also increased, until at length our importers pay at least two millions and a half sterling for the yearly import. The eggs are brought over chiefly in steamers, and landed at Southampton, Folkestone, Arundel, Newhaven, and Shoreham.

The egg-culture in France is almost exclusively confined to small farmers, who carry it on in a vigorous and commercial spirit, chiefly in Burgundy, Normandy, and Picardy. Every village has its weekly market, to which farmers and their wives bring their produce, in preference to selling at the farmyard to itinerant dealers. A merchant will sometimes buy twenty thousand eggs at one market; he takes them to his warehouse, where they are sorted and packed, and possibly sent off the same day to Paris or to London. According to the conditions required by the buyers, the eggs are sometimes counted, sometimes 'sized' by passing them through a ring, sometimes bought in bulk. In many of the north-west districts of France, poultry villages send almost their whole supply of eggs to England, from Calais, Cherbourg, and Honfleur, packed in cases containing from six hundred to twelve hundred each. Nearly all continental countries producing sufficient eggs for their own supply, the export from France is almost entirely to England. It is found that the buck-

wheat districts are those in which most eggs are reared—possibly a useful hint to English rearers.

The production of eggs for market is one thing, and the hatching of them another. We do not here go into the question of hatching, though much that is interesting could be written on the subject. It is enough to say that all the ingenious plans that have been set on foot for the artificial hatching and rearing of poultry have broken down through the costliness of the arrangements and management. Those who have tried any of these plans have arrived at the conclusion that both eggs and poultry can only be produced on a cheap scale by farmers or cottagers. And this opinion stands to reason. About farmyards and cottages in rural districts, hens can pick up food that would otherwise be wasted. Besides, let it be kept in mind, that hens like to roam about scratching for seeds, worms, and particles of lime to furnish material out of which the shells of their eggs are formed. If kept in confinement, exceeding care is required to supply the creatures with such requisites as their maternal instincts seem to require. What we suggest is, that cottagers, farmers, and others possessing sufficient scope for keeping poultry, should go far more largely into the business of egg-culture than they do at present. Why should they allow the great egg-supply for this country to be in the hands of others? The answer, we fear, is, that our farming classes generally look down contemptuously on the supplying of eggs for market. It is too small an affair to invite consideration. Small! Two millions and a half of money annually carried off by the French. Is that a trade to be treated with indifference?

We hear much of women's work, and of how young ladies should employ themselves. Here is something, at all events, for farmers' wives and daughters to set their face to without the slightest derogation of rank or character. Let them take up in real earnest the culture of fowls, if only for the sake of the eggs which on a great and remunerative scale may be produced. Those farmers' wives who already appropriate part of their leisure to this occupation deserve all honour; and we honour them accordingly.

LINES

TO A YOUNG LADY ON HER BIRTHDAY.

BY J. PITMAN (WHO DIED 1825).

ENGAGED thus by those you love,
May each successive Birthday prove
A source of new delight, nor cast
A single shade upon the past.

Thus ever may thy placid brow
And playful smile bespeak, as now
The peace that cheers thy gentle breast,
And bids thee still in hope be blest.

And thus may each revolving year
Still leave thy cheek without a tear;
Still Virtue strew thy flowery way
With sweets that never know decay.

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ASHORE IN THE STRAITS OF MALACCA.

THE corvette *Lyre*, one of Her Majesty's vessels, is to be imagined as lying at anchor off the mouth of the river Langkat, in the Straits of Malacca, a long heavy ground-swell rolling her lazily from side to side, as though even the sea found the climate too trying for much exertion. It is a glorious scene which lies before us: a white beech curtained with brilliant foliage, above which rises Parcelar Hill, a cone-shaped mountain, with its steep sides covered with dense jungle; but on board, the pitiless sun is pouring down his cloudless rays, making the pitch bubble out of the seams of the deck even through the double awning which is spread overhead. It is one o'clock in the afternoon, the dinner hour, and the officers, clad in white tunics and helmets, are listlessly lounging in long chairs abaft the mizzen-mast; while on the fore-castle, blue-jackets and marines are in little groups smoking, and some who find even that amusement too hot, are stretched about the deck sleeping or reading. Suddenly there is a slight stir among them, and the shrill whistle of a boatswain's mate is heard, followed by a hoarse bellow at the hatch-way: 'D'ye hear there? A seining-party will leave the ship at four bells [two o'clock]. All you as wish to go give your names to the master-at-arms. Away there, first cutters and dingy boys! Lower your boats!'

While the crews thus named are preparing their boats for the expedition, volunteers in plenty are sending in their names; for a seining, or in other words a fishing-party, which involves a run on shore and a sort of picnic on the beach, is always popular on board a man-of-war. At this time too, we had been nearly a month at sea, and our store of fresh meat in the wardroom having soon been exhausted, we had been living on the ship's provisions for a fortnight past; and H.M.'s salt beef (generally though disrespectfully known as 'salt horse'), never very popular at any time, had become extremely distasteful to our palates, though our Chinese cooks had exhausted their science and our patience in inventing new

methods of cooking the obnoxious article. I may mention here that the *Lyre* formed part of a squadron which had assembled in the Straits for the suppression of piracy, for the inhabitants of the Malay states have an interesting custom, handed down from remote ages, of making indiscriminate war on each other. The British government, not taking the view that this was a wise dispensation of Providence for getting rid of a useless race by mutual extermination, instead of leaving them to settle their disputes like the famous Kilkenny cats, resolved to put down this lawless state of affairs with a strong hand; so some of the powers that be, arranged a scheme for sweeping the rivers of the piratical craft which infested them.

The plan was beautifully simple and efficacious in theory: part of the squadron was to ascend a branch of the Salangore River, and drive all the boats they should find there round to the Langkat River, where the remainder, of which the captain of the *Lyre* had command, was to catch them. It ought to have been a success; but somehow or other the ungrateful pirates declined to come out of their hiding-places and be captured; and after spending a fortnight at anchor without making a single haul, our only duty being to send a detachment occasionally to relieve the guard at a stockade we had taken, we began to get tired of the cruise and the invariable 'salt horse', boiled, fried, or devilled, that formed the 'standing part' of every meal; so that any proposal to break the monotony of our daily grind, such as this seining-party promised, was eagerly welcomed both by officers and men.

At two o'clock a heavily laden cutter left the ship, towing the dingy, with the large seine-net which is supplied to every man of war, coiled up in it. Some of the older hands have taken a spare shift of clothes, for a great deal of rough dirty work may be expected, and a wise man likes to be prepared for emergencies; but the majority have been content with putting on the oldest suits they can find. As we have no chart in the boat, we find some difficulty in approaching the

shore, as a long reef runs off it, on which the heavy cutter strikes again and again as we pull up and down looking for a passage. 'Jump out there, half-a-dozen hands, and look for deep water,' sings out the lieutenant in command of the party; and directly a number of men are overboard, glad to cool themselves from the blazing heat; and they wade and splash about in all directions, till the sudden disappearance of one man, amidst the laughter of the rest, announces that he has found the channel rather suddenly; and pulling in his direction, the boat reaches the shore without difficulty.

Not a promising place for a cast where we are landing—the mouth of a deep rapid river, with steep banks of mud, behind which is a narrow belt of sand and bushes and then a dense jungle; but the dingy—a handy little boat—which has been sent to reconnoitre, returns with a report of a shelving sandy beach a few hundred yards away, which will just suit our purpose. So, telling off a few hands with axes to cut down wood and light a fire—a very necessary precaution when men are wet through—the remainder, after anchoring the cutter in the river, march off to the spot where the dingy is paying out the seine so as to inclose a large space of water. Long ropes are fastened to each end of the net, one of which is already held on shore, and the dingy soon brings in the other. Now comes the real hard work, as the heavy net is slowly and laboriously hauled to land, the two ends being gradually brought together by the direction of the experienced fishermen in charge. As the centre part of the net approaches, the excitement becomes great; and some of the men, regardless of sharks and alligators, swim behind, splashing water to frighten back the fish who are endeavouring to leap over the barrier which separates them from freedom. Then, amidst the cheery notes of a fishing chorus, most of us wading up to our waists in water, the purse or bulge of the net is run high and dry on the sand, and we eagerly examine our spoil. A curious collection they are, and many of them no use for cooking or any other purpose that we can tell. There are crabs of all sizes and brilliant colours, with claws out of all proportion to the size of their bodies, which immediately make their presence felt by severely nipping the bare legs and feet of the men nearest to them, of course much to the amusement of the rest of the party.

Another peril to the unwary are the cat-fish, unpleasant creatures, that have a playful knack of darting their poisonous spines into the flesh of any one incautiously touching them, thereby causing excruciating agony for some little time. Then come some little round fish, that have a very peculiar habit of swelling themselves out when touched, until they actually burst as it were with their own importance. I am not naturalist enough to tell the name of this peculiar fish, but the men used to call them 'beadles.' These and many others are thrown back into the

sea as unfit for food; but even after this wholesale rejection, we have several buckets of good eatable fish, which are sent off to the fire, which is now blazing brightly on the strip of sand at the mouth of the river. A question now arises as to who shall be cook, and one of the men is promptly chosen by the others, and placed in charge of the fish. There is a joke about selecting this particular individual. Some months previously, in the course of a chaffing-match with the wardroom cook's mate, he had made a retort so peculiarly cutting that the enraged knight of the gridiron applied an *argumentum ad hominem* in the shape of a saucpan, which laid him on the deck with a broken head; so whenever there was a question of cooking to be done after this, he was invariably selected for the office, as the others said he must have gone deeply into the subject.

We make cast after cast now, and fill all our spare buckets with fish, getting rather tired ourselves with the exertion of hauling a heavy net, up to our necks in water, till the night comes on apace, and we edge off towards the fire, making a final cast in front of it, as the glare attracts the fish in great numbers. We have become satiated with sport by this time; so the net is coiled up in the dingy, and all hands draw round the blazing fire; those that have taken the precaution to bring dry clothes now donning them; and the others, who have been less prudent, drying themselves in the grateful heat.

It is a strangely picturesque scene; the flickering blaze of the fire lighting up the groups of men stretched on the sand in various attitudes of negligent ease, their bare muscular limbs contrasting in almost startling whiteness with their bearded faces, bronzed almost black with exposure to the tropical sun. Some are drinking the scalding hot tea, which is now passed round in pannikins; while others are toasting fish, spitted on a stick for want of a more elaborate apparatus, and served up on a biscuit; a few grains of powder from the cartridges—which had been brought in case of an attack, supplying the place of salt, which had of course been forgotten. Our hunger is too great after our arduous exertions to notice any little defects in the cooking, and a hearty meal is enjoyed by all. Soon a pleasant odour of tobacco arises, as a circle is formed round a glorious fire, and a measure of grog is handed round by a corporal to each man. This latter luxury is supplied by the officers, who have in turn been indebted to the men for the tea which they had hospitably pressed on them.

'Now, my lads, for a song,' says the officer in command; and after some little demur as to who shall commence, a man strikes up an old sea-song describing the wreck of the *Kamillee*, near Plymouth, a number of verses with a chorus to each:

With close-reefed tops is neatly spread,
She sought for to weather the old Rame Head.
A fine effect is produced as the chorus is taken

up by thirty deep voices, many of the men, with a sailor's natural aptitude for music, singing the second and bass; and the unusual volume of sound drowned for a moment the deafening noises of the beasts and insects that are holding their usual nocturnal concert in the neighbouring jungle.

'Well done the starboard watch!' says a man when the song is concluded. 'Now the port.' And soon another song begins:

'Twas in Cawmand Bay lying,
With the Blue-Peter flying,
And all hands aboard for the anchor to weigh,
There came a young lady,
As fair as a May-day,
And modestly hailing, this damsel did say—

I forgot the exact words that the lady made use of, though the quaint phraseology much amused me at the time, but I remember that she wanted her true love, a seaman on board; but the captain declined her request, although

He said with emotion,
'What son of the ocean
But would his assistance to Ellen afford.'

In the climax, however, the lady unexpectedly turned the tables in her favour, for

Out of her pocket she hauls his discharge!

Chorus—

For out of her pocket she hauls his discharge!

Song followed song after this, the crackling of the roaring fire and the ceaseless din of the jungle forming an obligate accompaniment, which somehow seemed appropriate to the occasion, till a gun from the distant ship warned us that our time was up. Hereupon the officer in charge sent a couple of hands to haul in the cutter, which had been left at anchor in the river. Easier said than done, however, seeing that after a prolonged absence they returned, looking somewhat alarmed, and reported that they could not find the boat anywhere. This caused rather a commotion among the party, which a whisper of 'Pirates' did not diminish; so a rush was made for the rifles; and thus armed we marched to the beach; but not a sign of the boat could be found. There was just a chance that she had broken adrift; so the dingy was quickly manned and shoved off in search; but almost directly a loud shout announced that the cutter had been found full of water and apparently sinking. A number of men swam off to her at once; but the steep banks prevented our hauling her up; and we had just time, by dint of hard work, to remove her sails, oars, &c., when she sank, leaving us to our resources on the sand.

Our position looked unpleasant enough now, thus cast away in a piratical district; and besides, the gathering clouds to windward, of inky blackness, foretold to our experienced eyes that one of the violent squalls of wind and rain called Sumatras, which are of daily occurrence at this season, would soon be upon us. Seamen, however, are the handiest of mortals; and in a surprisingly short space of time a tent was rigged from the boat's sails and spars, under which we all huddled from the storm, which was now in full strength. How the rain did come down! As if the very flood-gates of heaven were open! And how the furious wind shook our frail tent till we expected every

moment to have it down about our ears. The situation was becoming every moment the more trying, as with sails soaked through, we were subjected to the full brunt of the awful drench. In spite of the trenches that we had dug in the sand with our oars to serve as water-ways, we were soon lying in a pool of water.

Strange to say, however, this was found rather a relief from the cold breeze, and many men proceeded to deepen their beds so as to immerse the whole body in water. Of the two elements the water was found to be the warmer! All the mosquitoes within hail had of course made their rendezvous in our tent; and even worse than they, the abominable sand-flies commenced their assaults with such zeal that nothing was to be heard but slaps and anathemas, bestowed with great impartiality. Strange to say, many men actually slept calmly through all the din; but most of us kept awake, singing and smoking; and so the wretched night passed away till the last touch was given to our misery by seeing the fire put out by an unusually heavy squall and rain. To supplement even the last touch, a cruel stop was put to our smoking, as our matches had become soaked and useless. Our pipe was literally put out; and as the last drop of grog had been served out, we had to content ourselves with singing and yarning till the first faint streaks of dawn appeared and the rain ceased.

What miserable, bedraggled creatures we were when the morning sun broke bright and cloudless on the beach, our dripping clothes stained with mud and sand, and our faces so swollen with bites that it was with difficulty we could recognise each other! However it did not do to stand and shiver—that is an absurdity which Jack has never been guilty of—so one party set to work trying to light a fire with the help of a cartridge (a futile endeavour, everything being so soaked); while others endeavoured to launch the cutter, which was lying high and dry on the mud, a large hole in her bottom explaining the hitherto unaccountable mystery of her sinking. Our ingenuity was fully taxed in our attempts to again wed the somewhat unwieldy craft to the water; but Jack's resources seem never to fail him, as with many an ingenious artifice we at length succeed in patching the leak and floating the cutter.

We were hungry enough by this time to eat anything; but it was no use piping to breakfast, for we had no food; and even had we caught some more fish, they were no use without a fire, and all attempts to create even a spark had been in vain. So we sauntered about the beach or tried to penetrate the jungle; in the latter case getting well bitten for our pains by the red ants, till our eyes were gladdened by the sight of two boats pulling in our direction from the ship. This was lucky, for we had just decided on risking the passage in the cutter. It was a long time before the boats could reach us, for they too had a difficulty in finding the channel; but at last they pulled into the river and landed with some provisions. Oh, how enjoyable was that glass of rum! How precious the matches wherewith to relight the beloved baccy! Even the raw pork was pleasant enough to our hungry stomachs. But after we had lit our pipes, we forgot all our troubles, and expressed our willingness to remain another night and have some more fun. It was not to be, however. Our relief brought us orders to return

aboard immediately; and in another hour we found ourselves alongside the ship, receiving the congratulations and chaff of our shipmates, and after all none the worse for our seining-party.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XVII.—AT OLD PLUGGER'S.

LONDON boarding-houses being regulated by no statute law, and as little liable to the supervision of the police and the interference of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Home Department as are other free commercial concerns, are very much harder to classify than are London hotels, inns, and public-houses. Their very exterior, which is decorated by no gaudy signs or gold-lettered inscriptions relative to viands, neat wines or cordials, might cause them to be mistaken for schools, workshops, or private dwellings. Even when a brass plate on the door bears the name of Bloss or Grewer or Pawkins—people who keep boarding-houses do appear, for some inscrutable reason, to parade the oddest patronymics—nobody not enlightened enough to know who Pawkins, Bloss, or Grewer may be, would gather much information from the laconic announcement. In all London there was not, taking one place with another, a much queerer boarding-house than one which stood on the Southwark or Surrey side of the Thames, and so nearly opposite to the Tower that the gaunt turrets of the grim old fortress were always (save in a fog of peculiar density) visible from its upper windows. This boarding-house, at the corner of what was called Dampier's Row, was very solidly built, chiefly as it would seem, of the massive timbers of ships dissected in the breakers yards close by; and with its bow-windows and bulging outline, seemed to stand hard by the water's edge, like some sturdy collier craft that had accidentally got stranded and was trying to accustom itself to life ashore. This particular boarding-house, the green door of which bore no distinguishing mark, was known in the neighbourhood and far along the river below bridge, as 'Old Plugger's.'

Whether there was a Plugger still in existence or not, it may be surmised that the original and veteran possessor of that name had enjoyed a widespread connection among mariners, for most of the present inmates of the house were seafaring persons. Most, but not all. And of the nautical boarders at Plugger's none were common seamen. The title of 'Captain' was in as constant requisition within its weather-bleached porch, overgrown with scarlet-runners, as it could possibly be at a military club farther west. Two-thirds of the swarthy, restless-eyed customers claimed to have a right to that honorary prefix, or at the least to have been 'officers' of one branch or another of the mercantile marine. The remainder, apparently attracted to the spot by the smell of the tar and paint from the neighbouring wharfs, or by the sight of the forest of masts that rose up between them and the Middlesex shore, or by congenial company, had much to say as to gulches and placers and auriferous river-bars, and gold-dust which, after months of toil and hunger, had been fished away in a week's mad revel; and colossal fortunes that could infallibly be realised by any one who had a pitiful thousand pounds at

command, and would be guided by sound advice as to its investment.

It was not a cheap boarding-house, according to the tariff of such establishments, this one of Old Plugger's. Rivals and humbler imitators held it in respect, for it was a thriving concern. Its rooms seldom stood empty for long, and its frequenters somehow found the wherewithal to pay their score. It was not a noisy place; by no means comparable to the riotous dens about Tiger Bay and elsewhere, or to the sailors' publicans at Wapping or Rotherhithe; but now and then there was a din from within it, a shouting of hoarse voices, a trampling of heavy feet, a crashing of woodwork or of glass, and then silence. And if just then a patrol of the police happened to be passing down the main street, and some one said that the disturbance was at Old Plugger's, the sergeant would shake his head as meaningly as Lord Burleigh in the *Critic*. But nobody seemed to care to inquire too curiously into the nature of the altercation in what was euphemistically known, among the trades-folk of the vicinity, as the captains' boarding-house.

It was, as has been said with reference to contemporary events at Carbery, sultry August weather, and if it was hot even on the spurs of breezy Dartmoor, assuredly it was hotter in the east of London. The strong sun brought out with great effect the combined perfumes of pitch and paint, of gas refuse and train-oil, of tide-mud and fried flat-fish, of old tarpaulins, rotten timber, and animal and vegetable refuse, never so pungent as beside the Thames. Society, gasping for air of purer quality than that town-made article which during the season and the parliamentary session it had respired perforce, had left London. But the captains who patronised Plugger's bore the loss of Society with philosophical equanimity, and were content to incur, by stopping where they were, a reputation for being wholly unfashionable.

A controversy might have been waged with reference to Old Plugger's as to which was the back and which the front of that hospitable mansion. The main-door certainly opened on the street, or rather row, named in honour of Dampier, and by the position of a main-door that of a house-front is commonly to be determined. But then Plugger's turned all its smiles, all its attractions towards the river. The best rooms were on that side, with their bow-windows and lumbering balconies; and there was even a narrow strip of garden, where snails ran riot among the neglected cabbages and tall sunflowers, and where the half of an old boat, set on end and festooned with sweet-pea and the inevitable scarlet-runner, did duty for an arbour, perilously near to the wash and ripple of the flood-tide.

In the broad wooden balcony that projected from the low first-floor of Plugger's and in part overhung this delectable garden, were some six or seven men in their shirt sleeves mostly, for coolness' sake, but otherwise not ill clad. Through the open bow-windows of the long room of which the balcony was an appendage, glimpses might be caught of some ten or twelve other customers, very similar in garb and bearing to those outside. It was early as yet, and breakfast—as betokened by the empty cups, empty bottles, and confusion of knives and forks and dirty plates—was already over. Some of the company were smoking a solemn morning pipe of

the yard-long 'churchwarden' variety, affected by sea-going persons when on shore; two seated at a round-table were engaged in a game at cards; and one copper-visaged and gray-haired captain, with a glass of steaming rum-and-water at his elbow, sat on the flat top of the wooden balustrade itself, and alternately swept the waters with the aid of a gleaming brass-bound telescope, or glanced critically at the cards and the players. In all this there was nothing to distinguish Pluggers from many another long-shore boarding-house, wherein mates and shipwrecks take their spell of rest, as it were, between the hardships of the last voyage and those of the next; and those who have seen much of men of this class are aware how much of sterling worth is apt to underlie the harmless peculiarities traditional to the calling. But a physiognomist who should have, himself unseen, accompanied some Asmodeus bent on taking a bird's-eye view of the company, could scarcely have failed to draw his own deductions from the countenances thus beheld. There were faces there in plenty which would have seemed in keeping with their surroundings had they been seen above the bulwarks of a long, black-hulled schooner, such as to her masts, and clean and sharp as to her run and out-water, beating to windward off the Isle of Pines, or within sight of the mountain mass of Cuba. There were others, newly shaven, that would have harmonised well with a shaggy beard and tattered cabbage-palm hat, surmounting the red shirt and pistol-studded belt of the Australian bushranger. And again, others which might be conceived to have been tanned to their mahogany hue by the reflection of the sun from the tawny surface of some African river, where, behind the mangrove swamp, might be seen the cane-thatched top of the barabacoen, where theango of 'live ebony' lay shackled. A very dangerous set of stamps, unless their looks belied them, were the bulk of Pluggers' patrons, and the more dangerous perhaps because they were not reckless—because they knew how to abstain from the overdose of liquor that sets the brain afloat and loosens the tongue.

'Let me tell yew, mister, yew'd be riddled, yew would, like any catamount treed, ef yew played that sorter game in Georgia, whar I war raised, yew would,' suddenly exclaimed one of the card-players, whose nasal drawl would of itself have revealed his nationality. 'That's three times I've seen yew try to pass the king.'

'Don't cry afore you're hurt,' retorted his adversary, whose air and tone were those of a sailor, and whose muscular wrists, emerging from shirt-cuffs linked by heavy sleeve-buttons of silver, were ornamented by mermaids and anchors and true-lovers' knots in blue tattooing of the true salt-water pattern. 'Guess this child wasn't born last week, shipmate! Haven't I sported the paste-board at New York with Dead Rabbits; at New Orleans with Plug-niggers; and in California with fellows that shook the points of their bowies in the table afore they set to a hand at poker! You're a nice hand to tax a man with cheating, you, with two court cards up your sleeve now!'

The American, who was spare and lightly built, compared with the opposite player, scowled as he thrust his bony right hand into an inner pocket of the loose coat which he alone of all the

occupants of the balcony wore. It may have been for the concealment of the cards alluded to; it may have been to get a grasp of some hidden weapon. The latter was the supposition that the most commended itself to the other gamester.

'Shew your hand, Sam Barks!' he said roughly, grasping a Dutch bottle, probably containing Schiedam, which stood in company with two glasses on the table, 'or I—'

'Belay there, you brace of babies!' interrupted the copper-visaged captain, thrusting his flashing telescope and his metallic face betwixt the disputants. 'Dog don't eat dog, my mates! I always was agin play between friends.—Sam, my lad, you won't make much out of Captain Hold.—Dink, my Trojan, you'll not find the American quite as green as spinach. Draw your stakes, my heroes, and let's shake hands and have a drink all round, for the renewal of friendship!' And this singular specimen of a peacemaker flourished his glass, swallowed its contents, and rattled the teaspoon against its sides until this substitute for a bell attracted the notice of a watchful attendant, wearing a striped cotton jacket, such as cabin-boys in hot latitudes affect.

'Three grogs, steward, and a goodish squeeze of lemon in mine, d'ye hear!' called out he of the copper countenance; and the dark-skinned mulatto lad who was called 'steward,' as factotums in *The Traveller's Rest* were called Deputy, nodded his woolly head, and was not long in bringing the desired refreshment. The kettle must have been kept always boiling, even on hot August mornings, at Pluggers', so ready was the supply of steaming spirits and water.

'Ah! my boys,' said the venerable founder of the *East*, as he took a second sip at the potent liquor, 'here's a blue blazing day for yew—put me in mind, and you too mayhap, of a morning in the doldrums, where sun is sun, and the very sea seems to simmer like a can of hot broth. I'd like to smell blue water again, I would. I'd an offer, Monday, to command a decentish brig, West Indies and Demerary way; regular molasses wagon; but old as I am, I'd rather have another bout in the South Seas. Black-birding for the Fiji and Queensland labour market is about the best sport a man can have, since they spoiled the fun we used to have off the West Coast.'

'Ay, but that game's pretty near played out too,' answered Hold meditatively. 'Why, yourself, Captain Grincher, lost your schooner that the man-o-war captured off the Solomon, and were tried at Sydney for wint the government fellows called kidnapping. No; give me Chinese waters, and a handy crew aboard a bit of a fast-sailing lorch to'—

'Gentlemen, gentlemen!' broke in the American, now in a good temper; 'allow me to say it air a pity to see men of your talents a-huddling of 'em into corners where they'll fail of their just reward. Now, listen, ef I could but get together a few spirited citizens and, mind ye, the handful of coin necessary for preliminary expenses, this child could point the place where lies, in fourteen fathom water, the treasure-ship *Happy Land* that left San Francisco, bound for New York, in the fall of '49, and never was heard of more. She had the value, in dust and bars, of'—

But the precise amount of the golden freight which, on board the *Happy Land*, awaited the

bold explorers who should reach that sunken vessel, is not destined to be set down in these pages, for the coloured steward at this juncture appeared holding a letter between his dusky finger and thumb. 'For Cap'n Hold,' said the mulatto; and Hold, recognising the handwriting, jumped to his feet in a trice, and snatched rather than received the envelope which the dark Ganymede of Plugger's held out to him; and tearing it open, read as follows: 'Come, and come at once. There is no time to lose. Something has occurred—something which makes your presence necessary. Come by noonday train. I will be at the park gate to the north soon after ten o'clock. Meet me there.' The letter was signed 'Ruth Willis.'

Hold's mind was instantly made up. 'I must leave anchor in a hurry,' he said, as he thrust back the letter into his pocket. 'So good-bye, Grincher; and good-bye, Barks!' and without further delay, he withdrew to prepare for the journey to Carbery. To pay his reckoning, to push some needful articles into a bag, and to consign his sea-chest to the custody of the authorities of Plugger's, well used to similar trusts, took but half an hour; and when the mid-day train started for the west of England it carried with it a second-class passenger, whose only luggage was a black bag, and who could easily have been mistaken for a man-of-war's man bound for Plymouth, there to rejoin one of those *Hornets* or *Mermaids* which have expensed the *Anethuses* and *Harmones* of the past.

Arrived at the station most convenient for his purpose, Hold trudged steadily on until he reached his old quarters at *The Traveller's Rest*, where he installed his bag in one of those single-bedded rooms which were always at the service of so solvent a customer as Mr Hold, who, while inland and among shore-going folks, dropped his titular distinction of captain. After supper, the fresh arrival at *The Rest* sallied forth, and making his way to Carbery, waited, pacing softly to and fro, under the shelter of the park wall.

CHAPTER XXIII.—UNDER THE PARK WALL.

ALL through that August day which witnessed the hurried journey of Mr Richard Hold, master manner, from the river-side bowers of Plugger's to the shaven shades of *The Traveller's Rest*, Sir Sykes Denzil's ward was in a state of feverish agitation, which it was hard for even her to conceal from those about her. We may fairly own that women surpass us in the social diplomacy which they study from the cradle almost, and that their powers of suppressing what they feel—not seldom from a noble motive—are greater than ours. All of us must have wondered, as we read the marvellous narratives of such prisoners as Truach and Lafuze, at the patient ingenuity that could contrive rope-ladders out of the flax thread of shirts, files out of scraps of rusty iron, tools from any fragment of metal that came to hand. None the less should we be astonished at the power of dissembling evinced by the captives on the watch for the perilous moment to break prison.

What Ruth dreaded above all other things was what a woman always does dread, the scrutiny of her own sex. That men are credulous, women prone to give credit to the shallowest excuse, readily hoodwinked, and easy to pacify, has been

an article of faith with Eve's daughters since prehistoric times. The real spy to be feared, the real censor before whom to tremble, is decidedly feminine, in the estimation of women who have anything to hide. Ruth therefore devoted her whole attention to keeping up a brave outside before the eyes of her guardian's daughters, Blanche and Lucy, two as honestly unsuspicious girls as could be met with in all Devonshire.

But as all *a priori* reasoning is tainted with the fatal flaw of bad logic, Ruth forgot Jasper Denzil, still shut up in the house on account of his recent accident, and whose crooked mind had not much to do save to employ itself in fathoming the crooked ways of others. Now a man, if circumstances coerce him to limit his powers of observation to the narrow sphere of domesticity, is capable of becoming a spy more formidable than women would readily admit. If he sees less, he reasons more cogently as to what he does see, and he has the further advantage of being an unsuspected scout from whom no danger is anticipated.

Jasper Denzil had excellent reasons for the profound mistrust with which he regarded the Indian orphan. The very presence beneath his father's roof of such a one as Ruth was in itself a standing puzzle and challenge to his curiosity. That she was Hold's sister, the sister of a coarse-mannered adventurer of humble birth, was what the captain could not bring himself to believe. For Ruth seemed innately a lady. Either she must have had the advantages of gentle nurture and education, or as an actress in the never-ending social drama she displayed consummate skill. But whatever might have been her birth (and there were times when he was tempted to fancy that in her he saw that young sister of his own, long dead, the date of whose decease was supposed to coincide with that of the sad mood which had become habitual to Sir Sykes), Jasper with just cause regarded her as a most artful person.

The ex-cavalry officer remembered well enough that interview between Sir Sykes and Hold, at which he had played the part of an unsuspected audience. The demand to which his father had acceded was that Sir Sykes should receive in a false character Hold's sister as an inmate of Carbery. True the seafaring fellow—smuggler, pirate, or whatever he might be—had laughed mockingly, and had spoken in strangely ironical accents when dictating to the baronet on this subject. But be she who she might, Ruth must be either an accomplished schemer or the willing instrument of others, or she would not have been where she was.

It may have been a petty malice, suited to his feline nature, that caused Jasper on that particular night to remain down-stairs later than usual, causing his sisters also to defer their retiring to rest for an extra half-hour. They kept early hours at Carbery as a rule, as rich people, in the profound dullness of the dignified ease which is not enlivened by guests, are sometimes apt to do. Sir Sykes, who always stayed long enough in the drawing-room to sip his coffee, was the first to disappear; but no one save himself and his valet knew when he left the library for his bedroom. When the captain was in health it was his custom to spend an hour or two in trying rare combinations of skill and luck among the ivory balls in

the billiard-room; but since the steeplechase he had been glad to retire unfashionably early.

It was because he fancied that Miss Willis was impatiently awaiting the moment for separating for the night, that Jasper chose to delay it; but at length the time came when the good-nights had been exchanged, and the drawing-room was abandoned. Captain Denzil's room, which adjoined the picture-gallery on the first-floor, was immediately beneath that occupied by the Indian orphan. Repeatedly, after he reached it, did Jasper fancy that he heard a light swift step overhead, as if Sir Sykes's ward were hurrying to and fro; and then his sharpened ear caught the sound of a stealthy tread upon the oaken staircases.

Extinguishing the lights for the time being, Captain Denzil threw open his window, which overlooked the park; and by the time his eyes grew somewhat accustomed to the darkness, he saw, or thought he saw, a female form glide from under the black shadow of the giant sycamores and flit bat-like away through the solitary gloom.

'If it were not for this provoking arm,' said the captain, who was still, despite the skillful care of worthy little Dr Aulius from Pebworth, suffering less from his hurts than from the Nemesis that dogs the steps of the hard-liver, 'I'd win the odd trick to-night. But if I can't follow to see who it is that she meets, at any rate I shall get a second peep at yonder ingenuous creature when she comes back. A rare moonless night it is for such an errand!'

Jasper's eyes had not deceived him. It was Ruth, whose slight figure had passed away into the deepening shadows of the night, crossing the park towards its northern boundary, which abutted upon the broken country leading to the royal forest, treeless, but none the less in sound like the forest of Dartmoor. It was so dark that even one better accustomed to the locality might have failed to keep to the right course among narrow and grass-grown paths, many of them trodden by no human foot, but by the cloven hoofs of the deer trooping down to pool or pasture.

Yet Ruth threaded her devious way past holt and thicket, past pond and hollow, almost as well as the oldest keeper on the estate would have done, and presently gained the gate which, as has been already remarked, stood always open on the northern side of the park, corresponding to that on the southern or seaward side, for, as has been said, the public had an ancient right or user to traverse Carbery Chase. But as a right of ingress for men might imply a right of egress for deer, some zigzag arrangement of iron bars had been set up, screen-like, at either extremity of the footpath, and this effectually restrained the roving propensities of the unhindered herd within.

'So—you are late, Ruth! I have kicked about here, till I began to think you'd thrown me over. No wonder, living among fine folks, that you're getting to care little how long a rough fellow like yours to command is kept on the look-out.'

Such was the sunny greeting of the stout sailor-like man whom Ruth found invariably pacing to and fro under the lee of the wall.

'I couldn't not come, brother, one moment earlier without arousing suspicion that might be the ruin of us both,' answered the girl steadily, but in a conciliatory tone. 'And what, after all,

signify a few minutes more or less of expectation, compared with a life of constant effort, constant watchfulness, and the sense of depending on one's self alone in the midst of enemies who sleep beneath the same roof and feed at the same table? I tell you that the tension on my nerves is far greater than I ever dreamed that it could be, and that there are times when I even fancy that I shall be driven mad by the strain imposed upon me of playing a part, ever and always, without rest or respite!'

Ruth's voice as she proceeded had grown shrill and tremulous with the effect of the emotions, long pent up, that found expression at last, and she pressed her slender hand upon her heated brow with a gesture which Hold was not slow to mark.

'Come, come, Missy,' he said in accents far more gentle than those which he had first employed; 'you've taken this thing, whatever it is, too much to heart. See, now; I'd never have suggested the plan if I had not believed that in the house of Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet, you'd have been like a fish in water. Didn't we always call you in joke "My Lady," and that because your ways weren't as our plain ways? Haven't you got your head stuffed as full of book-learning as an egg is full of meat? Aren't you dainty and proud and what not? Till folks declared, to be sister o' mine, you must have been changed at nurse. And now do you find it a hardship to have to consort with you Denzil people!—not your equals, I'll be bound, if all had their due.'

'You can't understand me, Brother Dick,' said the girl softly, and turning away her face. 'Give me, I say, a real stand-point; let not my life be a lie, and I should fear no comparison with those who are daily my dupes. But I hold my tenure of the bed I sleep on, the bread I eat, by mere subsistence, and I see no way as yet to—'

'That top—the dandy Lancer fellow—Captain Jasper don't seem to take to you then?' asked Hold; and Ruth winced perceptibly at the blunt question.

'Captain Denzil will never, I imagine, care very much for any one but his dear self,' she answered gently. 'Now that he is an invalid—though he will soon be out and about again—he thinks that he pays me no small compliment in preferring my conversation to the insipid society of his excellent sisters. But I no more expect a proposal of marriage from Jasper Denzil than I expect the sky to fall!'

'That's a pity,' said Hold dryly; and then a pause ensued. 'You didn't send for me, Missy, to tell me that?' he added, after some moments spent in thought.

'No!' returned Ruth in her low clear voice. 'I sent for you that you might read a letter—how obtained I leave you to guess—which concerns us both. Have you the means of doing so?'

'Catch me without light, Missy!' complacently replied the seaman, drawing from one of his deep coat-pockets a small dark-lantern, which he lighted. 'Now for this letter,' he said; and receiving it from Ruth's hand, read it attentively twice over. As he did so, some rays from the shaded lantern that he held illumined his resolute face.

'Wilkins, eh? Enoch Wilkins. That's the name the craft hails by; and he's a land-shark, it seems,' muttered Hold, as he refolded the document.

'He is a London lawyer, as you see,' explained Ruth; 'and all I know of him, gleaned from various sources, is that he was the captain's creditor for a large sum, which Sir Sykes has very recently paid. He is, I gather, a sort of turf solicitor of no very good repute, and has somehow a grip on poor weak Sir Sykes. Now the baronet, I feel sure, has but one secret'—

'That, you may be certain of!' interjected Hold. 'And this man knows it and trades on it,' said the baronet's ward eagerly; 'and in doing so his path crosses ours. See! The word "others," which is underlined, must surely have reference to you and me. Rely on it, he has an inkling of our plans, and may counteract them.'

'Take the wind out of my sails, will he, eh?' said Hold grimly, and with a threatening gesture.

'Brother Dick, Brother Dick, when will you learn wisdom!' said his sister, smiling. 'Your buccaneer tricks of clenched fist and angry frown are as out of place in peaceable England as it would be to strut about with pistols and cutlass. You are not on the West Coast now, or off the Isle of Pines, or in the Straits of Malacca, to carry things with a high hand. Our plain course is to make an ally, not an enemy of this lawyer. He knows much, but perhaps not all, and may be induced to accept as true the story that has been told to Sir Sykes. In any case, he cannot be very scrupulous; and will not be desirous, by bringing about a dispute and a scandal, to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. The baronet's purse is deep enough for all of us.'

'You're right!' rejoined the sailor, with a whistle that was meant to express unbounded admiration for his sister's shrewdness. 'I'll make tracks to London, and see what terms can be made with Commodore Wilkins, before he shews his face here.'

'Tell him nothing that he does not know,' said Ruth, as the pair separated.

'Trust me for that!' was Hold's confident reply.

Jasper, still at his window, caught but a glimpse of the girl's slight form as it glided by and re-entered the house.

To be continued.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE IRISH BAR.

In the walls of the Dublin 'Four Courts' could speak, how many a pleasant story and witty repartee and sparkling bon-mot they could tell! Let me recall and string together some of these pearls of anecdote and wit, some of which, though perhaps not altogether new to lovers of anecdote, may well bear repetition.

The first Viscount Guillamore, when Chief Baron O'Grady, was remarkable for his dry humour and biting wit. The latter was so fine that its sarcasm was often unperceived by the object against whom the shaft was directed.

A legal friend, extremely studious, but in conversation notoriously dull, was once shawing off to him his newly-built house. The bookworm prided himself especially on a sanctum he had contrived for his own use, so secluded from the rest of the building that he could pore over his books in private quite secure from disturbance.

'Capital!' exclaimed the Chief Baron. 'You surely could, my dear fellow, read and study here

from morning till night, and no human being be one bit the wiser.'

A young and somewhat dull tyro at the bar pleading before him commenced: 'My lord, my unfortunate client'—then stopped, hemmed, hawed, hesitated. Again he began: 'My lord, my most unfortunate client'—Another stop, more hemming and confusion.

'Pray go on, sir,' said the Chief Baron. 'So far the court is with you.'

In those days, before competitive examinations were known, men with more interest than brains got good appointments, for the duties of which they were wholly incompetent. Of such was the Honourable ——. He was telling Lord Guillamore of the summary way in which he disposed of matters in his court.

'I say to the fellows that are bothering with foolish arguments, that there's no use in wasting my time and their breath; for that all their talk only just goes in at one ear and out at the other.'

'No great wonder in that,' said O'Grady, 'seeing that there's so little between to stop it.'

It was this worthy, who being at a public dinner shortly after he got his place, had his health proposed by a vagabond guest.

'I will give you a toast,' he said: 'The Honourable ——, and long may he continue indifferently to administer justice.' The health was drunk with much merriment, the object of it never perceiving what caused the fun.

Lord Guillamore could tell a story with inimitable humour. He used to vary his voice according to the speakers, and act as it were the scene he was describing, in a way infinitely diverting. Very droll was his mimicry of a dialogue between the guard of the mail and a mincing old lady with whom he once travelled from Cork to Dublin, in the old coaching days.

The coach had stopped to change horses, and the guard, a big red-faced jolly man, beaming with good-humour and civility, came bustling up to the window to see if the 'insides' wanted anything.

'Guard!' whispered the old lady.

'Well, ma'am, what can I do for you?'

'Could you'—in a faint voice—'could you get me a glass of water?'

'To be sure, ma'am; with all the pleasure in life.'

'And guard!'—still fainter—'I'd—hem—I'd—a—like it hot.'

'Hot water! Oh, all right, ma'am! Why not, if it's plazing to you?'

'With a lump of sugar, guard, if you please.'

'By all manner of means, ma'am.'

'And—and—guard dear'—as the man was turning to go away—'a small squeeze of lemon, and a little—just a thimbleful—of spirits through it.'

'Och, isn't that *punch*!' shouted the guard. 'Where was the good of beating about the bush? Couldn't you have asked out for a tumbler of punch at once, ma'am, like a man!'

Another favourite story was of a trial at quarter-sessions in Mayo, which developed some of the ingenious resources of Paddy when he chooses to exercise his talent in an endeavour not to pay. A doctor had summoned a man for the sum of one guinea, due for attendance on the man's wife. The *medico* proved his case, and was about to

retire triumphant, when the defendant humbly begged leave to ask him a few questions. Permission was granted, and the following dialogue took place.

Defendant. 'Docthor, you remember when I called on you?'

Doctor. 'I do.'

Defendant. 'What did I say?'

Doctor. 'You said your wife was sick, and you wished me to go and see her.'

Defendant. 'What did you say?'

Doctor. 'I said I would, if you'd pay me my fee.'

Defendant. 'What did I say?'

Doctor. 'You said you'd pay the fee, if so be you knew what it was.'

Defendant. 'What did you say?'

Doctor. 'I said I'd take the guinea at first, and maybe more at the end, according to the sickness.'

Defendant. 'Now, docthor, by vartue of your oath, didn't I say: "Kill or cure, docthor, I'll give you a guinea?" And didn't you say: "Kill or cure, I'll take it?"'

Doctor. 'You did; and I agreed to the bargain. And I want the guinea accordingly.'

Defendant. 'Now, docthor, by vartue of your oath answer this: Did you cure my wife?'

Doctor. 'No; she's dead. You know that.'

Defendant. 'Then, docthor, by vartue of your oath answer this: Did you kill my wife?'

Doctor. 'No; she died of her illness.'

Defendant. (to the bench). 'Your worship, see this. You heard him tell our bargain. It was to kill or cure. By vartue of his oath, *he done neither!*—and he axes the fee!'

The verdict, however, went against poor Pat, notwithstanding his ingenuity.

Something like the following story has been told before in these pages. It will, however, bear repetition. Mr F—, Clerk of the Crown for Limerick, was over six feet high and stout in proportion. He was the dread of the cabmen, and if their horses could have spoken, they would not have blessed him.

One day when driving in the outlets of Dublin, they came to a long and steep hill. Cabbly got down, and walking alongside the cab, looked significantly in at the windows. 'His honour' knew very well what he meant; but the day was hot, and he was lazy and fat, and had no notion of taking the hint and getting out to ease the horse while 'larding the lean earth' himself. At last Paddy changed his tactics. Making a rush at the cab, he suddenly opened the door, and then slammed it to with a tremendous bang.

'What's that for?' roared Mr F—, startled at the man's violence and the loud report.

'Whist, yer honour! Don't say a word!' whispered Paddy, putting his finger on his lips.

But what do you mean, sirrah? cried the fare.

'Arrah, can't ye hush, sir? Spake low now—do. Sure, 'tis letting on I am to the little mare that your honour's got out to walk. Don't let her hear you, and the craitur 'll have more heart to face the hill if she thinks you're not inside, and that 'tis only the cab that's troubling her.'

Baron R—, one of the gravest and most

decorous judges on the bench, had a younger brother singularly unlike him, who was a perpetual thorn in his side. A scapegrace at school, the youth would learn nothing, and was the torment of his teachers. Having been set a sum by one of the latter, he, after an undue delay, presented himself before the desk and held up his slate, at one corner of which appeared a pile of coppers.

'What is the meaning of all this, sir?' said the master.

'Oh!' cried the youth, 'I'm very sorry, sir, but I really can't help it. All the morning I've been working at that sum. Over and over again I've tried, but in spite of all I can do, it will not come right. So I've made up the difference in halfpence, and there it is on the slate.'

The originality of the device disarmed the wrath of the pedagogue, and young R— was dismissed with his coppers to his place.

The youngster when grown up boasted an enormous pair of whiskers, of which he was very proud. One day a friend met him walking up Dame Street with one of those cherished busy adornments shaved clean off, giving a most comical look-sided appearance to his physiognomy.

'Hollo, R—!' he exclaimed, 'what has become of your whisker?'

'Lost it at play,' he replied. 'Regularly cleaned out last night at the gaming-table of every mortal thing I had—nothing left to wager but my whisker.'

'And why, man, don't you cut off the rest, and not have one side of your face laughing at the other?'

'I'm keeping that for to-night,' said the scamp with a wink, as he passed on.

The father of the Lord Chancellor—afterwards Lord Plunket—was a very simple-minded man. Kindly and unsuspicious, he was often imposed upon, and the Chancellor used to tell endless stories illustrative of his parent's guileless nature.

One morning, Mr Plunket taking an early walk was overtaken by two respectable-looking men, carpenters apparently by trade, each carrying the implements of his work.

'Good-morning, my friends,' said the old gentleman; 'you are early afoot. Going on a job, eh?'

'Good-morrow kindly, sir; yes, we are; and a quare job too. The quakers and the most out-of-the-way you ever heard of, I'll be bound, though you've lived long in the world, and heard and read of many a thing. Oh, you'll never guess it, your honour, so I may as well tell at once. We're going to cut the legs off a dead man.'

'What!' cried his hearer, aghast. 'You don't mean—'

'Yes, indeed, 'tis true for me; and here's how it come about. Poor Mary Neil's husband—a carpenter like ourselves, and an old comrade—has been sick all the winter, and departed life last Tuesday. What with the grief and the being left on the wide world with her five orphans, and no one to earn bit or sup for them, the craitur is fairly out of her mind—stupid from the crying and the fret; for what does she do, poor woman, but send the wrong measure for the coffin; and when it come home it was ever so much too short! Barney Neil was a tall man; nigh six feet we reckoned him. He couldn't be got into it, do what they would; and the poor craitur hadn't

what would buy another. Where would she get it, after the long sickness himself had, and with five childer to feed and clothe? So, your honour, all that's in it is to cut the legs off him. Me and my comrade here is going to do it for the desolate woman. We'll just take 'em off at the knee-joints and lay them alongside him in the coffin. I think, sir, now I've told you our job, you'll say 'tis the quarest ever you heard of.'

'Oh!' cried the old gentleman, 'such a thing must not be done. It's impossible! How much will a new coffin cost?'

The carpenter named the sum, which was immediately produced, and bestowed on him with injunctions to invest forthwith in the necessary purchase.

The business, however, took quite an unexpected turn. Mr Plunket on his return home related his matutinal adventure to his family at breakfast, the future Chancellor, then a young barrister, being at the table. Before the meal was ended, the carpenters made their appearance, and with many apologies tendered back the coin they had received. He who had been spokesman in the morning explained that on seeing the gentleman in advance of them on the road, he had for a lark made a bet with his companion that he would obtain the money; which, having won his wager, he now refunded. Genuine Irish this!

MONSIEUR HOULOT.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III.—TO-MORROW—LIBERTY.

THERE is no phrase of abuse so apparently innocent and yet so cutting and disturbing as that, 'I know all about you.' It asserts nothing of which one can take hold, and yet it implies a great deal that may well be offensive. It is customary to say that the life of the best of men, could it be subjected to the full glare of daylight in all its bearings, would be found more or less spotty and blemished; and perhaps it is this secret consciousness of hidden iniquities that gives such force to the innuendo.

But in the mouth of Houlot, who you will remember made use of the expression, and thus caused this sneaky expulsion from my premises, the phrase was one that gave us all considerable uneasiness. Did he really know anything about my connection with the firm of Collingwood Dawson? It seemed hardly likely that he would have come to borrow money of me, had such been the case. But this, after all, might have merely been a device to throw dust in our eyes. His visit might have been a spying one, for the purpose of seeing how the land lay. He might indeed have seen his wife and recognised her.

Mrs Collingwood was full of terror lest such should have been the case. She decided that he was coming to claim her. Every passing footstep, every ring at the bell of the outer gate caused her a vivid thrill of fear. For my own part I did not think the danger thus great in that direction. It was hardly likely that a man who had taken such pains to escape from a tie that must have been

profoundly irksome to him, would wish to renew it now. His habits were fixed and eccentric, and probably he would be as much dismayed at the prospect of being claimed by his wife, as she would at the idea of going back to him. These thoughts I did not divulge to Mrs Collingwood. They suggested to me, however, a plan of action.

I determined to go and see M. Houlot, to beard the lion in his den. Probably I should be ill-treated and abused for my pains; but it was worth the trial. Houlot's house was, as I have said, on the slope of one of the hills overlooking the town, the top of which was fringed with forest, whilst all down the sides were houses with terraced gardens, full of greenery, and with dividing walls covered thick with vines and pear-trees. It was a tall, timbered house, occupied by many families; and a common staircase, rickety and creaky, but with fine old carved oak balusters, led to the various floors. Houlot lived on the fourth stage, I found; and I made my way up panting, and not without fear lest the boards should give way beneath me. A sempstress who was busily at work in one of the rooms with her door wide open and her children scattered about the landing, indicated the door of Houlot's room, and told me that she had just seen him go in.

I knocked several times without any one taking notice of me. Finally, after I had made a considerable din, the door was suddenly opened and Houlot stood before me.

'What do you want?' he cried, after glaring at me a few moments from under his pent-house brows. 'Have you come to bring me the money?'

'Let me come in and explain matters,' I said.

He looked doubtfully at me for a moment, and then sullenly drew on one side and allowed me to pass in. His room was bare of furniture, except for one square deal table and a chair without a back. In one corner of the room a mattress and blanket were spread on the floor, in another a lot of books and papers were heaped confusedly together, all covered by a thick mantle of dust. A small cooking stove stood in the middle of the room, the black iron pipe from which went through a hole into the huge chimney; and a large open fireplace, which had once warmed the room, was covered with a rough framework of planks and sacking. The aspect of the place was squalid and comfortless, but it had one redeeming feature—there was a splendid view from the open window. A great fold of shining river, inclosing a stretch of marsh-land and wide green prairie, dotted with feathery aspens and monumental poplars, among which shewed here and there a cluster of farm buildings, and an occasional church spire. A black morose-looking windmill, with sails pugnaconically stretched out, as if daring an attack from some nineteenth-century Don Quixote, stood solitary on its grass toft. Range upon range of hills inclosed the landscape, dappled with the shadow of the lazy clouds; with here a dark ravine, and there a white gleaming chalk cliff.

'You are well placed here,' I said, making for the window. There was an overpowering smell of brandy in the room, that made one feel quite sick this fine summer morning. 'You have a splendid view.'

'Well enough for that,' growled Houlot. 'But what is the good of a view to a hungry man?'

I noticed now that he looked haggard and starved, and that there was an unhealthy fiery flush upon his face and a wild look in his eyes, as if he had been drinking without eating for a good while.

'You need not go hungry unless you like,' I said. 'I can't lend you all the money you ask for; but anything you want for daily needs I will let you have till you get your remittances from England.'

'I have no remittances coming from England,' said Houlot. 'I have given up writing for the rascal who filched my work. But if you will only let me have that five-pound note we will put matters on a different footing. Let me show up Collingwood Dawson!'

'Yes, that's all very well; but what will you gain by it?'

'I shall vindicate my own name.'

'What! the name of Houlot?'

He winced, but retorted angrily: 'What business is it of yours what name?'

'If I lend you the money to carry out your plans, it seems that I am entitled to ask what chance I have to be repaid. But apart from that, having vindicated your name, how many five-pound notes will it be worth?'

'Why, look here,' he said; 'if that rascal can make a reputation and money by his stuff, which is only mine diluted and spoilt, surely for the genuine work of the real man—'

'If you are trusting to that, I must decline to advance any money for the speculation. Why on earth, man, when you had a sufficient income paid you regularly, and lived as you liked, did you give it up and embark on a sea of trouble?'

'Because I have a mission in this world, which I dream sometimes I shall accomplish.'

'And the mission is?'

'To open the eyes of fools.'

'My dear fellow, they object to the operation, and have punished a good many people for trying it.'

'Then I will be punished,' he said. 'But anyhow, I'll expose these wretched smatterers, who serve up my things with all their wit and wisdom taken out of them, who travesty my best thoughts. Why, they have even made vulgar my very name!'

'Houlot?' I said, 'Houlot? Is that the French for Dawson or Collingwood?'

'That is not my real name,' he said. 'I abandoned that years ago. Every one turned his back upon the name. I did so myself at last.'

'One of the results of the eye-opening process, I suppose?'

He nodded sullenly. 'My name used to be Dawson,' he said.

'You don't mean to say,' I cried, 'that you are the Dawson who was supposed to have been drowned years and years ago?'

'I was that man—that unhappy man! But

why,' he cried, turning round fiercely upon me, 'why do you make me go back to all these hateful things?'

'Then is the memory of your former life hateful to you?'

'I escaped from the most wretched condition that a man was ever in: tied to a woman who made my life an intolerable burden. She was not a bad woman, not an unworthy woman. She was—— Well, she had a mother who was fat and well to do, and lived in St John's Wood.'

Houlot laughed hoarsely, knocked out his pipe on the empty stove, looked mechanically for some tobacco in a jar on the chimney-piece. It was empty. I offered him my pouch, which he took with an indignant scowl.

'Well, I was meant for great things,' he went on between the whiffs of his pipe—'meant for great things; and here I am. Life fribbled and frittered away, and that woman the main cause of it! There was no escape from her any other way. I believe in my heart that the woman loved me in her fashion; all the greater was my unutterable woe.'

'And you ran away from her?'

'I disappeared from existence. I would not harm the woman. I would not spoil her life any longer. No; I adopted another plan. At the risk of my own life, I contrived that my death should be apparent. The means were simple enough, although they caused me some anxious thought and preparation. I went down to a little visited part of the coast with which I was well acquainted, and put up at an inn where I was known. Taking my cue partly from the well-known farce of *Box and Cox*, I went out one morning early and deposited a suit of clothes in a little niche in the cliffs: a wild and solitary spot, rarely visited by any living creature. Later in the day, I went out again, telling the people of the inn that I was going to bathe. I left my clothes on the beach and took to the water. I had chosen my time so that the set of the tide would carry me to the place where I had deposited my clothes, and I drifted along with little exertion. Arrived at the spot, I landed, found my clothes all right, and put them on. Then I started on foot along the coast till I reached a road-side station, made my way to London, and then crossed the Channel, intending to go to Paris. I thought that I should be able to get literary employment there; for French is as a second native tongue to me. My mother was a Frenchwoman; her name was Houlot; hence the name I adopted. But I took this place on my way; and on the journey I fell from the roof of the diligence, and the wheel went over my hand. Amputation was necessary; and by the time that I was cured, I had spent all my little store of money and owed something beside. But the people here were very humane and kind. I set to work to write with my left hand, and earned a little money meanwhile by teaching English; and by degrees I got into the knack of writing again, and contributed some articles to the English press, by which I got a little money. It was all a flash in the pan; my pupils fell away, my articles were no longer acceptable. My friend here—pointing to the bottle—'was always at my elbow. But I shall shake myself free one of these days.'

'And if it happened,' I said, as he finished and

was silent, sitting puffing at the pipe that had long since gone out—'if it happened that the wife was still waiting for you—that she had heard a rumour of your existence, and had come to seek you'—

'No; don't talk of that, for any sake!' he cried, springing to his feet. 'Wretched and miserable as I have been, I have never wished myself again tied in that hateful knot. There! you would never betray me?'

'But if she were rich, and able to give you a good home?'

'Never, never!' he said. 'What degradation, what abasement!'

'To take you out of this den of yours, to clothe you in well-made garments, to bring you again into society?'

'Never, never! I would hide myself in the remotest corner of the world. Tell me, man, what do you mean? You know something; you are a spy, a traitor!'

Houlot looked here and there as if for a weapon, and I thought it prudent to make quickly for the door.

I went home and told Mrs Collingwood all that had occurred, excepting the horror that M. Houlot had shewn at the idea of returning to her. That I thought it most prudent to suppress. She seemed a little softened. I thought, when I told her his account of his disappearance in the sea, and that his motive was a good one as far as she was concerned.

We sat till late that night talking in the little pavilion, the light from the windows of which was reflected in the dark river. I fancied every now and then I heard a footstep softly pacing up and down the embankment between us and the water's edge. I certainly thought I had securely locked the garden gate, and never dreamt of our being disturbed. Just as my guest had risen to take her leave, the door suddenly opened, and M. Houlot stood upon the threshold. Mrs Collingwood screamed, and ran to the furthest corner of the room, crouching behind the window curtains. Houlot glared at her for a moment, then slammed to the door and strode away. I ran after him.

'You have deceived me!' he said savagely, as, breathless, I overtook him upon the embankment; 'and I, like a fool, believed you, and pictured her to myself—still loving, still faithful to the memory of a wretched being; and I came to seek you, to know more about this wonderful phenomenon. And now I see it all; she dreads me as if I were a leper! Well, it matters not now; I am away to-morrow. Some kind friends have raised a little money for me; I don't need your help now. To-morrow before daylight I start on my way to make my claim for that which is mine own. Tell her—tell her that she need not fear me, that I shall never trouble her, nor she me! I have been a slave long enough; but to-morrow, light; to-morrow, freedom!'

'Take care what you do, I said, 'for the person whom you seek to ruin, whom you would expose and bring to confusion, is the woman whom you abandoned and left to the mercy of a pitiless world. Every step you take to that end is over her, poor creature. The harm you did before came right after much misery; the harm you will do now can never be cured!'

He uttered an exclamation of rage and despair, and disappeared in the darkness.

'Is he gone?' cried Mrs Collingwood, as I returned once more to the pavilion.

'Yes, he is gone; he is away to London to-morrow to claim his rights, as he calls them—to ruin us if he can. We must go also, and fight him.'

'Do you know,' faltered Mrs Collingwood, 'that there has come a great change over me these last few minutes? The thought that he really loved me and sacrificed himself for my sake; and then he living here so lonely and wretched, and I luxuriating on the fruits of his genius! Oh, my heart has smitten me sorely, and I think if he came again I should not be frightened!'

'In that case,' I said bitterly, 'your course is easy enough; you have only to make him understand he is forgiven. I will go with you to-night.'

'O no, not to-night!' she said. 'No; it is too sudden. But don't let him go away; tell him to stay, and that perhaps things may yet be well.'

'He can't leave before the first diligence,' I said, 'and I will meet him there and tell him to stop.'

'Do, do!' she cried. 'Keep him here for to-morrow; then I may have made up my mind what will be for the best.'

I went to see the diligence start next morning; but no M. Houlot was there. He had overslept himself probably. Well, I would go and see him at his apartment, and tell him how matters stood. I knocked at his door; but could not make him hear. Then I scribbled some words upon a visiting card I happened to have in my pocket, and thrust it under the door.

The next time I saw that card it was in the hands of the *commissaire* of police, who came, accompanied by the *juge d'instruction*, to make some *perquisitions* as to what I might know of the last hours of M. Houlot; for he had been found that morning lying dead on his mattress.

The sad end of Houlot—well, of Dawson; if you like, but I have grown to think of him and talk of him as Houlot—quite unmanned me for a while. I could not help blaming myself as being in some way the cause of it. From the moment of its discovery, I took a violent antipathy to the work I had in hand. Houlot seemed to be always standing at my elbow, reproaching me with killing him over again. I don't know whether the widow—really now a widow—had any such visions; I fancy not. After the first shock of the news, she found that Houlot's death was really a great relief to her. It put an end to her troubles once for all. We found at his lodgings a great heap of manuscript, which she purchased from the agent acting for the landlord of the premises—who had taken possession of everything in satisfaction of rent—for a few francs. Whether she found the material among it for a series of novels, I don't know, for as soon as I had finished the work in hand, I gave up my connection with Collingwood Dawson. I have since taken to writing improving books for the young, and find that it pays much better. Still I hear of him occasionally, and find that he continues to be a tolerably successful author; and the other day I met my late employer, who told me that she was married for a third time, and to a gentleman of great literary ability, who had undertaken the management of Collingwood Dawson. For my own part, I advised her

to form him into a Limited company, with a preference in the allotment of shares for gentlemen of the press.

MR FAIR, 'THE SILVER KING.'

THE prodigious quantities of silver recently dug from the mines of Nevada and California, have, as is generally known, had the effect of lowering the commercial value of silver to the extent of several pence per ounce, and thereby depreciated the American dollar from one hundred to about ninety cents; that is to say, the dollar has sunk nearly fivepence in value—a circumstance greedily seized hold of by certain parties in the United States, who propose, with more ingenuity than honesty, to pay the public creditors in silver money without making any allowance for depreciation. On this extraordinary policy so much has been said by the newspapers, that we do not need to go into particulars, further than to hint that before all the play is played, the supporters of this scheme may unpleasantly find that there is some truth in the old proverb that 'honesty is the best policy.'

Something like an idea of what enormous wealth is being realised by means of the above-mentioned silver mines is given in an account of Mr Fair, 'The Silver King,' in a late number of that smart London newspaper, *The World*. The following is an abridgment of this amusing paper.

'There is a man alive at this present moment who, if he were so minded, could give his daughter a marriage-portion of thirty millions sterling. He would then have about ten millions left for himself. He lives six thousand miles west of London, half-way up a mountain-side in Nevada; and his daughter lives with him. Seven years ago he was a poor man; to-day he is the Silver King of America. He has dug forty million pounds' worth of silver out of the hill he is living on, and has about forty millions more yet to dig. If he lives three years longer he will be the richest man in the world. His name is James Fair, and he is the manager, superintendent, chief partner, and principal shareholder in the Consolidated Virginia and California Silver Mines, known to men as the "Big Bonanza." He has an army of men toiling for him day and night down in the very depths of the earth—digging, picking, blasting, and crushing a thousand tons of rock every twenty-four hours.

'Seven years ago there were two little Irishmen in the city of San Francisco keeping a drinking-bar of very modest pretensions, close to one of the principal business thoroughfares. Their customers were of all kinds, but chiefly commercial men and clerks. Among them was an unusually large proportion of stock and share dealers, mining-brokers and the like, who, in the intervals of speculation, rushed out of the neighbouring Exchange five or six times a day for drinks. Whisky being almost the religion of California, and the two little bar-keepers being careful to sell nothing but the best article, their bar soon became a place of popular resort. And as no true Californian could ever swallow a drink of whisky under any circumstances without talking about silver mines or gold mines or shares in mines, it soon fell out that, next to the Stock Exchange itself, there was no place in San Francisco where so much mining-talk went on as in the saloon

of Messrs Flood & O'Brien, which were the names of the two little Irishmen. Keeping their ears wide open, and sifting the mass of gossip that they listened to every day, these two gentlemen picked up a good many crumbs of useful information, besides getting now and then a direct confidential tip; and they turned some of them to such good account in a few quiet little speculations, that they shortly had a comfortable sum of money lying at their bankers'. Instead of throwing it away headlong in wild extravagant ventures, which was the joyous custom of the average Californian in those days, they let it lie where it was, waiting, with commendable prudence, till they knew of something good to put it into. They soon heard of something good enough. On Fair's advice they bought shares in a mine called the Hale and Norcross, and were speedily taking out of it fifteen thousand pounds a month in dividends. This mine was the property of a company, and though it had at one time paid large and continual dividends, it was now supposed to be 'worked out and worthless.' Mr Fair, however, held a different opinion; and when he came to examine it carefully, he found just what he expected to find—a large deposit of silver-ore. Thereupon he and Flood & O'Brien together bought up all the shares they could lay their hands upon, and obtained complete control of the mine.'

Besides being a clever and experienced miner, Mr Fair entertained the belief that by patient examination into holes and corners of the mine he would discover a gigantic vein of silver-bearing ore. He discovered the vein, the estimated value of which was a hundred and twenty millions sterling.

'In the excitement caused by this astounding discovery it is scarcely more than the hard truth to say that San Francisco went raving mad. The vein in which the Bonanza was found was known to run straight through the Consolidated Virginia and California mines, dipping down as it went, and could not be traced any farther. But that fact was nothing to people who were bent on having mining stock; and vein or no vein, the stock they would have. Consequently they bought into every mine in the neighbourhood—good and bad alike—sending prices up to unheard-of limits, and investing millions in worthless properties that have never yielded a shilling in dividends, and never will. When Flood had bought a large quantity of the Bonanza stock, and had assured to himself and his partners the controlling interest in the mines, he recommended all his friends to buy a little; and O'Brien did the same. Those who took the advice are now drawing their proportionate shares of dividends, amounting to about five hundred thousand pounds a month. The majority of those who bought into other mines are, in Californian parlance, "busted." What these three men and their latest partner Mackay are going to do with their money is a curious problem, the solution of which will be watched with great interest in a year or two to come. The money they hold now is yielding them returns so enormous that their maddest extravagances could make no impression on the amount. Every year they are earning more, saving more, and investing more. They have organised a bank with a capital of ten millions of dollars; they control nearly all the mining interests of Nevada and California;

they have a strong grip of the commercial, financial, and farming interests all along the Pacific slope; and by a single word they can at any moment raise a disastrous panic, and plunge thousands of men into hopeless ruin. It will be an interesting thing to wait and watch how this terrible power for good or evil is to be wielded.'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

PROFESSOR OSBORNE REYNOLDS, in his presidential address to the Scientific and Mechanical Society of Manchester, discussed the Smoke question; a very pressing question in a town with so grimy an atmosphere as Manchester. He pointed out that great part of the smoke is produced by the furnaces of small steam-engines carelessly managed, which are numerous throughout the town and neighbourhood, and suggested that it might be possible to do away with these by producing power at some great central establishment, and supplying it by transmission to all the little factories of a district. 'But how is the transmission to be effected? That is a question which has often been considered by engineers, 'not so much as a means of preventing smoke, but because there are in our towns numberless purposes for which power is, or at all events might be, usefully employed, and for which it is almost impossible or very inconvenient to provide on the spot. Very small steam-engines are very extravagant in coal, besides requiring almost as much attention as large ones; and they are dangerous. . . . If, therefore,' continues Professor Reynolds, 'power in a convenient form could be obtained whenever and wherever required, at a fixed and reasonable charge, and with no other trouble than the throwing into gear of a clutch or the turning of a tap,' it would be largely made use of, and would 'supplant steam-engines, which are now kept working with little or nothing to do for the greater part of their time;' whereby an important saving of coal would be effected. The suggestion of supplying steam-power on a retail principle is not new, and nothing but some practical difficulties stand in the way. All we want is a solution of the question by some competent engineer. Let the genius but arise; he will find fame as well as fortune waiting for him.

The Council of the Statistical Society will give their Howard Medal for the present year and twenty pounds to the author of the best essay on 'The Effects of Health and Disease on Military and Naval Operations.'

The Council of the Royal Geographical Society have resolved to devote five hundred pounds yearly—in grants to assist persons having proper qualifications, in undertaking special geographical investigations (as distinct from mere exploration) in any part of the world—to aid in the compilation of useful geographical data and preparing them for publication, and in making improvements in apparatus or appliances useful for geographical

instruction, or for scientific research by travellers.—In fact to persons of recognised high attainments for delivering lectures on physical geography in all its branches, as well as on other truly scientific aspects of geography, in relation to its past history, or the influences of geographical conditions on the human race.' Adherence to this course for a few years will do more to advance geography as a science than having recourse to sensational meetings.

Mr Dumas, the distinguished chemist, in giving an account to a scientific Society in Paris of the liquefaction and solidification of gases, stated that the specimen of oxygen produced by Mr Pictet of Geneva was the size of a hen's egg, and resembled snow in the solid form, and water in the liquid form. Theoretically he had concluded that the density of liquid oxygen would be about the same as that of water; and this has been confirmed by experiment.

As regards hydrogen, Mr Dumas explained that it was liquefied under a pressure of six hundred and fifty atmospheres with cold minus one hundred and forty degrees; and by evaporating the liquid thus obtained, the solid condition, showing the colour of blue steel, was arrived at. Many years ago this possibility was foreseen, and the most advanced chemists admitted the existence of a theoretical metal—hydrogenium. 'This confirmation of the real nature of hydrogen,' continued Mr Dumas, 'is not to be regarded merely as a theoretical result useful to pure science; it appears to be of great importance for the future of industry. A certain knowledge of the metallic nature of hydrogen will have a certain influence on metallurgy, of which manufacturing arts will take advantage.'

The phonograph has been exhibited, and made the subject of lectures and experiments in many places, and as we anticipated, has given ample demonstration that the statements put forth concerning it are true. Marvellous as the fact may appear, all the words spoken into the instrument seem to be there stored up ready for repetition whenever excited by the cylinder of tinfoil. They do not come out quite in the same tone as that in which they go in; but they are perfectly distinct, and retain the characteristics of the speaker or singer. At a scientific meeting in London, one of the company sung *God Save the Queen* into the phonograph. On coming to the highest note, he had to make three attempts before he could reach it; and these failures excited much merriment when the stanza was (only too faithfully) repeated by the instrument. The same air was sung and produced without failures, and a comic ditty was sung and inscribed on the same cylinder; and very curious it was afterwards to hear the stately movement of the national hymn accompanied by the jingling notes of the funny melody. An instrument so ingenious as this ought to be applicable to many useful purposes. Already there are improvements on the original invention, and we shall doubtless hear of others.

The very best photographs of the sun ever yet

seen have been taken at the Observatory, Meudon, near Paris, by Mr Janssen; and copies on glass, twelve inches diameter, are now placed in the hands of some of our scientific societies. They well repay study, for they shew distinctly the granular appearance of the sun's surface: millions of white specks imbedded, so to speak, in a dense dark cloud. This surface is liable to violent commotions, or 'vortex movements,' as Mr Warren De la Rue calls them, 'of which we can form no conception whatever in thinking of tornados on the earth's surface. The photosphere,' he continues, 'had been whirled up in cloud-like masses in various parts of the sun; and he saw at once that that might be the origin of the luminous prominences with which we are all now so familiar.' A conclusion drawn from these appearances is that sunspots are not the most important of solar phenomena. 'There are changes taking place from day to day, from hour to hour, and in some cases from minute to minute, which completely change the aspect of the various parts of the sun, shewing an amount of activity which it is extremely necessary to study.' And it is suggested that this could best be done by establishing a physical observatory devoted to ceaseless observation of the sun accompanied by photography. Such an observatory has been recently founded at Potsdam, near Berlin.

Professor Wolf of Zurich has spent many years in collecting from every possible source records of sun-spots from the beginning of the seventeenth century, and the beginning of the telescope. And after careful examination he arrives at the conclusion that they do not bear out the theory of an eleven years' period, for since 1610 there are twenty or thirty different maxima and minima, extending to sixteen years in some instances, and in others contracting to seven years. This is a fresh proof that many more observations are required for a settlement of the question.

Put a lump of zinc into the boiler of a steam-engine, and it will prevent the formation of 'scale'; that is, the stony crust which, as all engineers know to their sorrow, is very injurious and involves constant expenditure. The experiment having been successfully tried during four years by certain manufacturers in France, the Minister of Public Works appointed a Commission to inquire into and report upon it. From their Report, which was published last year in the *Annales des Mines*, we learn that the zinc is to be placed in the boiler as far as possible from the furnace, the quantity being a quarter-pound for every five square feet of boiler-surface if the water be soft, and a half pound if the water be hard. The boiler is then worked in the usual way; and when opened for the usual cleaning the appearances as the Commission describe will be—'If the water be but slightly calcareous, the deposits, instead of forming solid and adherent scale, are found in a state of fluid mud, which is easily removable by simple washing. The iron being clean and free from rust, no picking or scraping is needed, whereby an important saving of time and labour is effected.'

On the other hand, if the water be strongly calcareous or hard, 'the deposits are as coherent and strong as though the zinc had not been employed; but this strong coat does not stick to the iron. It can be pulled off by hand, or at the worst detached without much effort, leaving the

iron clean. A simple washing clears it from the boiler; and in this case, as in the foregoing, picking and scraping are avoided.'

Here the question arises—What has become of the zinc? The answer given is, that it is not strictly correct to say it has disappeared, for it has been transformed into oxide of zinc, a white and earthy substance, which often preserves the lamellar texture of the metal, the central part sometimes continuing metallic and unattacked. At the same time it is worth remark that no trace of dissolved zinc is found in the water taken from the boilers.

A communication to the Royal Institute of British Architects by Mr Penrose makes known certain important 'improvements in paint materials invented by Mr W. Noy Wilkins,' which have been satisfactorily tested in the decoration of St Paul's Cathedral. In the words of Mr Penrose, 'The results arrived at are of such extreme simplicity as to make their general application extremely easy, and also to give a strong *a priori* conviction of their permanence. In the matter of pigments, white-lead is entirely banished from the painter's stock, and the substitution of kaolin, mixed with a smaller proportion of zinc-white, combined with the limitation of the palette to the mineral colours. Mr Wilkins has practised for twenty-five years exclusively with these materials. . . . His discovery is that the chemical driers, which produce a very unfavourable effect upon painter's work, whether of the house-painter or the artist, causing it to darken and to crack, can be entirely dispensed with, by simply boiling for a short time a small quantity of Turkey umber in the oil to be used for painting—whether linseed, poppy, or nut oil—producing as desired a drying painting oil or a varnish, and the residuum forming a valuable oil cement.' Mr Wilkins permits cultivators of art, desirous of more particulars, to address him at 'The Cottage, Elm Grove, Peckham' (London).

In another communication, by Mr L'Anson, on the Architecture of Norway, the wooden churches were of course mentioned, and something was said about Norwegian timber which will bear repetition. 'The Scotch fir furnishes the red wood, and the spruce-fir the white. What strikes one,' said the speaker, 'is, that the Scotch fir, which with us is regarded as the least valuable kind of fir-wood, scarcely fit for railway sleepers or fences, is the best fir in Norway. I account for that superiority of the Norwegian over the English tree in some measure by the greater length of time that Scotch fir takes to come to maturity in Norway than in this country. Scotch fir grows at the rate of as much as two feet a year in Britain, and takes about fifty years to become a usable tree; whereas in Norway it would take probably a century to grow to a tree of equal size.'

In the last annual Report of the Royal Asiatic Society it is stated as a now nearly accepted fact, that the language of Madagascar is a Malay language from Sumatra, and that its connection with the African Suahili is only that of loan-words, just as Persian has borrowed largely from Arabic. Philologists and others interested in Eastern Africa will perhaps be glad to hear that a grammar of Malagasy has been recently published.

Plantations of the cinchona tree were first begun in Jamaica in 1860, at the cost of the government. The experiment has proved so successful that

more than eighty thousand trees are now growing in different parts of the island. Henceforth the West Indies will compete with India in supplying the world with quinine.

It is well known that in some churches and large halls a reverberation prevails which annoys the persons assembled, and prevents their hearing distinctly. A few years ago the discovery was made that the reverberation could be deadened by stretching threads across the building from wall to wall below the ceiling. This curious fact has been further confirmed at the Palace of Industry, Amsterdam, and in the church of Notre-Dame des Champs, Paris, in each of which, by the simple means of threads, the reverberation is silenced.

The importation of fresh meat from the United States of America commenced in the autumn of 1875. Since then the quantity brought to this country from New York, Philadelphia, and other ports, has reached a total of more than sixty million pounds; and great as the trade has become, it tends to increase. The graziers and agriculturists of Europe will have to consider whether some means may not be found for increasing and cheapening cattle-food, if they desire to compete with the transatlantic graziers. Whether the way shall be by improved irrigation, extended drainage, or creation of pastures, remains to be discovered. On this subject much valuable information is contained in a work entitled *Food from the Far West*, with special reference to the Beef Production and importation of Dead Meat from America (W. P. Nimmo, London and Edinburgh).

On Some Means used for testing Lubricants is the title of a paper by Mr W. H. Bailey, read before the same Society. There needs no argument to prove that if it be possible to discover the oil or grease which will best prevent friction, it ought to be discovered; and the engravings in this paper shew the contrivances for effecting this discovery. To Dr Joule, F.R.S. all who use machinery are indebted for having, as Mr Bailey remarks, 'enabled us to look upon the cost of friction and the cash value of heat as mere questions of arithmetic. The energy which passes away in wasted heat may be measured and valued with nearly as much facility as any article of commerce. The science of heat teaches us that the relations between heat and mechanical motion are regulated by well-defined, accurate, and rigid principles.' Those who would command Nature's forces must first learn her laws; the first rudiments of which say, that when we produce frictional heat in our machinery, we become law-breaking prodigals, who have incurred fines and penalties, which are generally paid when a cheque is given to settle the coal-bill.

Perhaps not many people south of the Border are aware that there are gold-fields in Scotland; but that gold can be found in Sutherlandshire and in the south-west, has long been known to the dwellers in those localities; and now in the *Scottish Naturalist*, Dr Lauder Lindsay describes the gold-fields of Lanarkshire. In the Upper Ward of that county he tells us that 'of alluvial gold, from nuggets big enough to make breast-pin heads down to granular dust, there is no scarcity. It may be collected at any time by simple washing from the beds or banks of any stream of the district. Wherever a supply of gold is wanted for museum specimens or for presentation jewellery, a

sufficiency is forthcoming. A few hours' work of a miner, and still more the conjoint efforts of a band of miners extending over several days, produce the number of grains or ounces required.' The people of Scotland have long known that gold can be found in various parts of the country. The difficulty, however, is to find it in sufficient quantities to pay the expense of working, or even in searching for it. Persons of an eager turn do not sufficiently think of this, and hence endless disappointments.

Our notice (No. 726, p. 750, 1877) of Dr Sayre's method of treating curvature of the spine has led to inquiries for further particulars: we have pleasure therefore in mentioning that Smith, Elder, & Co. have published a book by Dr Sayre, entitled *Spinal Disease and Spinal Curvature—their Treatment by Suspension, and the Use of the Plaster of Paris Bandage*. Besides clear descriptions, the book contains engravings which represent the method of treatment, and may be easily understood.

BUTTERFLIES.

ONCE more I pass along the flowering meadow,
Hear cushats call, and mark the fairy rings;
Till where the lych-gate casts its cool dark shadow,
I pause awhile, musing on many things;
Then raise the latch, and passing through the gate,
Stand in the quiet, where men rest and wait.

Bees in the lime-trees do not break their sleeping;
Swallows beneath church eaves disturb them not;
They heed not bitter sovs or silent weeping;
Cares, turmoil, griefs, regrets, they have forgot.
I murmur sadly: 'Here, then, all life ends.
We lay you here to rest, and lose you, friends.'

By no rebuke is the sweet silence broken.
No voice reproves me; yet a sign is sent;
For from the grassy mounds there comes a token
Of Life immortal—and I am content.
See! the soul's emblem meets my downcast eyes:
Over the graves are hovering butterflies!

WASTE SUBSTANCE.

A correspondent suggests that the refuse from broken slate which is thrown aside at the quarries as useless, might be ground down into powder and used as paint. The writer informs us that he has tried powdered slate, and found that it not only made good paint but that the paint lasted well for outdoor work.

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1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

2d. To insure the return of papers that may prove ineligible, postage-stamps should in every case accompany them.

3d. Manuscripts should bear the author's full Christian name, surname, and address, legibly written.

4th. MS. should be written on one side of the leaf only.

5th. Poetical offerings should be accompanied by an envelope, stamped and directed.

Unless Contributors comply with the above rules, the Editor cannot undertake to return ineligible papers.

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BORLUM.

Long ago—you may say in 1808—when I was a boy at Peebles, the school-children, as a variety in their boisterous amusements, occasionally bombarded with stones a grievously defaced effigy built into the walls of a ruinous old church in the neighbourhood. With savage significance, the unfortunate piece of sculpture was called Borlum, and as Borlum it had been pelted by several successive generations. From the dearth of historical knowledge at the spot, no one could explain who or what was meant by Borlum; and not till some years afterwards, in the course of reading, did I find out that by Borlum was meant Brigadier Mackintosh of Borlum, who commanded a resolute party of Highlanders in Mar's rebellion of 1715, and who, by their masterly audacity in marching towards the Border, threw the southern counties of Scotland into a state of indescribable alarm. To Borlum, as he was familiarly termed, was thus assigned the character of a bugbear along the whole course of the Tweed; and long after he had passed away, and when the political events in which he was concerned were forgotten, the original terror of his name survived in the vengefully destructive recreations of school-children. In a vicious capacity, a harmless piece of sculpture, which had nothing at all to do with Borlum, was doomed to suffer for a popular scare nearly a hundred years previously.

In the history of that miserably managed affair, Mar's Jacobite rebellion, Mackintosh of Borlum—or more properly *younger* of Borlum, for his father was still living—stands conspicuously out as a military hero, who threw into the shade many of higher title and pretensions. How with five hundred of his clan, with banners flying, he marched to Inverness, and seized that important post. How he hastened on to the Lowlands, eluded the troops designed to intercept him; crossed the Firth of Forth with a large force in open boats, and captured Leith. How, carrying everything before him, he marched onwards to the Border, in order to join the rebel forces of

General Forster in Northumberland—are all facts belonging to history. His sagacity, foresight, intrepidity, and daring courage were worthy of a better cause. Getting into England, and mixed up with half-hearted movements, Borlum is very much lost sight of. The enterprise, owing to Mar's indiscretion, had been shockingly ill considered. The English Jacobites failed to rise in a body, as they were justified in doing, for the auxiliaries which had been expected from France never made their appearance; and the whole thing collapsed, as is well known, by the humiliating capture of the insurgents by General Carpenter at Preston, in Lancashire. Surrendering at discretion, the whole were conducted as prisoners to London—Borlum among the rest. A dreadful downcome to the proud Highland chief, but not more so than to Lords Derwentwater, Winton, Nithsdale, Kenmore, Carnwath, Widdington, and other Jacobite noblemen.

It is not altogether agreeable to look back on the dynastic struggles which took place in England in the first half of the eighteenth century; for with some redeeming traits of character, they give a very mean view of human nature. The subject has been suggested to us by the appearance of a work which many will appreciate for its lively account of scenes and circumstances hitherto imbedded in the dry records of history. We mean *London in the Jacobite Times*, by Dr Doran, F.S.A. (2 vols. Bentley and Son). The writer, it is sorrowful to learn, passed away before the work at which he had long patiently laboured had well been published; and we regret that he has not survived to hear the praises bestowed on his endeavours to produce a picture of past times such as is rarely presented. The way the subject is treated is quite unique. Instead of going into regular historical details, which would be alike tedious and tiresome, the author writes in a sketchy and anecdotic style without pause from beginning to end, and we have before us a drama of unflagging interest, extending over the greater part of a century. We do not think, however, that the book would have been the worse of a few pre-

liminary remarks on the strange circumstances by which the Stuarts forfeited the crown, and placed themselves in the grotesquely unhappy condition of kings retired from business.

The flight of James II. from England, and practically his abdication of authority, December 22, 1688, finished the house of Stuart. When a king runs away from his subjects, and stupidly flings down a magnificent inheritance, he has a bad chance of being called back again, particularly when by a course of exasperating and illegal conduct he has forfeited general esteem. Yet, from the date of that fatal flight there were successive plots by Jacobite adherents to bring back the Stuarts to the throne. Throughout the reign of William III. and of Queen Anne, the plottings were of a comparatively obscure character. On the death of Anne in 1714, and the installation of George I. under a parliamentary Act of Settlement, came the crisis. The rebellion of 1715 broke out, and being quenched at Preston, the fierce dissensions of Jacobites and Whigs arose. Dr Doran commences his narrative with the death of Anne, but scarcely awakes to his subject till the droves of rebels from Preston enter London and are dispersed through the various prisons, the more noble of them being conducted to the Tower.

While preserving the forms of law, the government did not put off time in the examination and trials of the captured rebels. The pulpits rang with sermons condemnatory of their crimes. Joseph Addison, in his paper the *Freholder*, railed upon them with indecent subserviency. There was no want of evidence to convict the leading spirits in the insurrection; but matters were considerably simplified by the voluntarily proffered testimony of the Rev. Robert Patten, who had been formerly a curate at Preston, and acted as chaplain to the rebel forces. Clapped into prison with his associates, Patten pondered on the best means of escaping the gallows; and the longer he thought of it, he became the more firmly convinced that his best plan was to become king's evidence. His testimony was accepted; and at the cost of being branded throughout all time as a rascal, he daily stood up in court and told every particular requisite to convict the unhappy noblemen and gentlemen with whom he had been associated, and whose bread he had eaten. Very much through the testimony of this wretch, the prisons were gradually cleared by the exit of batches of convicts on hurdles to Tyburn. The Tower was similarly relieved of two of its noble inmates, Derwentwater and Kenmore, who perished on the scaffold; and there would have been more of them, but for the escape of the Earl of Nithsdale disguised in his wife's clothes, and for the fortunate reprieve of the Lords Widdrington, Nairn, and Carnwath. On the evening of the day on which the Earl of Derwentwater was beheaded (24th February 1716), London was thrown into a state of commotion by the appearance in the sky of an extraordinary Aurora, in which there were vivid resemblances of armies, flaming swords, and fire-breathing dragons—the Jacobites accepting their death as a token of the indignation of Heaven at the cruel murders on Tower Hill, and prefiguring the rise of the sun of Stuart. On the escape of the Earl of Derwentwater, this famed Aurora was called the 'Earl of Derwent-

water's Lights;' and it is said that an aurora is still so named in the vicinity of Dilston.

The government of George I. had some difficulty in dealing with the Earl of Wintoun, who contrived to get his trial put off as long as possible, on the plea that he was not yet prepared with his evidence. The truth is, the earl was a somewhat eccentric being. In his youth he had run away from his home at Seton House, went to France, and hired himself to work as a blacksmith. Returning at the death of his father, when everybody had given him up for lost, he assumed the title George fifth Earl of Wintoun, and was living quietly at Seton when the rebellion broke out. He had no wish to connect himself with it; but stung by some outrageous proceedings of the authorities, he joined the insurrection, and so got himself into trouble. When brought to the bar of the House of Lords, there was some surprise at the oddity of his behaviour. Whether from cunning or affectation, he did not seem to understand why his trial should be hurried on, though in reality he might have complained of the delay. All the earl's shifts did not greatly serve him. Patten, on being questioned, said that he had seen the Earl of Wintoun on several occasions with a drawn sword in his hand when the Pretender was proclaimed. After this, of course Wintoun was found guilty, and condemned to be beheaded. Not a pleasant drive from Westminster Hall to the Tower, accompanied by the Gentleman Gaoler, ceremoniously carrying an axe with its edge turned towards the condemned earl. One feels a degree of satisfaction in knowing that after all the Earl of Wintoun escaped his doom. Confined to an apartment in the Tower preparatory to the morning of execution, he brought his knowledge as a blacksmith into play by cutting through the iron bars of his window by files supplied by his servant, and dropping to the ground got clear off. He died at Rome in 1749, his title and estates being meanwhile forfeited. The title has been lately revived in favour of the Earls of Eglintoun. But with the disappearance of the last of the Setons in the direct line, an ancient and honourable family was blotted from the Scottish peerage.

Mackintosh of Borlum—called by mistake Borland by Dr Doran—was confined along with General Forster and a host of others in Newgate. Borlun and Forster are stated to have often quarrelled regarding the military conduct of the insurrection, their angry debates often furnishing amusement in the corridors, court-yard, and common room in the prison, to which visitors were admitted without hinderance, as to a tavern, for the more eating and drinking there were the better it was for Mr Pitt, the governor. Pitt, himself, was never disinclined to lend his assistance in eating a dinner, or in finishing a bowl of punch. So countenanced, the revelries in Newgate were boundless. Dr Doran affords a glimpse of this state of things. Visitors and sympathisers supplied the prisoners with money.

While it was difficult to change a guinea almost at any house in the street, nothing was more easy than to have silver for gold in any quantity, and gold for silver, in the prison; those of the fair sex, from persons of the first rank to tradesmen's wives and daughters, making a sacrifice of their husbands' and parents' rings and other precious movables for the use of the prisoners. The aid was so reckless, that forty shillings for a dish of early peas and

beans, and thirty shillings for a dish of fish, with the best French wine, was an ordinary regale !

Forster was to be tried on the 18th April, but a week previously the town was startled with the intelligence that he had broken bounds ; he was off. 'His escape,' says Doran, 'was well planned and happily executed. His sharp servant found means to obtain an impression of Pitt's master-key, from which another key was made and conveyed to Forster, without difficulty. Pitt loved wine, and Forster seems to have had a collar full of it. He often invited the governor to get drunk on its contents. One night, Pitt got more drunk than usual, finished the wine, and roared for more. Forster bade his servant to fetch up another bottle. This was the critical moment. The fellow was long, and Forster declared he would go and see what the rascal was at. On going, he looked the unconscious Pitt in the room ; and the way being prepared by his servant, and turnkeys, as it would seem, subdued by the "oil of palms," master and servant walked into the street, where friends awaited them. Pitt sounded the alarm, but everything had been well calculated. A smack lay at Holly Haven, on the Thames, which had often been employed by the Jacobites in running between England and France.' By this means, Forster effected his escape, and 'the joy of the Jacobites was uncontrollable.' The government shut up Pitt in one of his own dungeons, and offered a thousand pounds for the recovery of 'General Forster ;' but pursuit was useless. The general was safe in France.

Borlum, who knew that his trial would speedily take place, meditated on plans for emulating the success of Forster. Strange to say, notwithstanding a knowledge of the irregularities that were carried on in Newgate, the public authorities made no change in the administration of affairs. Wine flowed, punch was sent round, and the prisoners suffered scarcely any stint in their indulgence. Things were indeed rather worse than better—all which was favourable to a plan concocted by Borlum and his fellow-captives. 'The prisoners,' says Dr Doran, 'might cool themselves after their drink, by walking and talking, singing and planning, in the court-yard, till within an hour of midnight. Evil came of it. On the night of the 4th [May] the feast being over, nearly five dozen of the prisoners were walking about the press-yard. Suddenly, the whole body of them made an ugly rush at the keeper with the keys. He was knocked down, the doors were opened, and the prisoners swept forth to freedom. All, however, did not succeed in gaining liberty. As the attempt was being made, soldiers and turnkeys were alerted. The fugitives were then driven in different directions. Brigadier Mackintosh, his son, and seven others overcame all opposition. They reached the street, and they were so well befriended, or were so lucky, as to disappear at once, and to evade all pursuit. They died in various directions. Some others less fortunate were secured, and were not only heavily flogged and thrust into loathsome holes, but treated with exceptional brutality.' What a picture of a metropolitan prison in the reign of George I.!

The escape of Borlum from Newgate with certain other convicts produced an immense sensation. For decency's sake, if for nothing else, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen came down to the prison,

and solemnly gathered some evidence on the subject. The least thing in the way of amends was to offer a reward for the capture of 'William Mackintosh, commonly called Brigadier Mackintosh.' placards were profusely posted up describing the appearance of Borlum. 'A tall, raw-boned man, about sixty years of age, fair complexioned, beetle-browed, gray-eyed, speaks broad Scotch.' The reward for capturing him was two hundred pounds, to which sum, however, were added a thousand pounds by the government. Every effort failed to secure the old Highland chief. He, and his son succeeded in getting on board a vessel in the Thames, by which they reached the coast of France, and there for the present we must leave him.

These furtive escapes did not slacken operations at Tyburn, to which doomed men from Newgate were carried in half-dozens, as if for a public entertainment. We can hardly in the present day realise the brutality of these exhibitions, to which, however, ladies of quality regularly adjourned to see the show. Hanging formed a holiday amusement of the fashionable society of London. Such was the disregard of humane feeling that officers of the law were not ashamed to practise cruel inspections on convicts at the very scaffold. Dr Doran describes a case of this kind. It was that of a person named David Lindsay, convicted of traitorous visits to France, who was sentenced to die, and carted to Tyburn in spite of an amnesty. 'When his neck was in the noose, the sheriff tested David's courage, by telling him he might yet save his life on condition of revealing the names of alleged traitors. David, however sorely tempted, declined to save his neck on such terms. Thereupon, the sheriff ordered the cart to drive on ; but even this move towards leaving Lindsay suspended did not shake his stout spirit. All this time the sheriff had a reprieve for his unnecessarily tortured fellow in his pocket. Before the cart was fairly from under Lindsay's feet, it was stopped, or he would have been murdered.' Taken back alive to Newgate, a very unusual spectacle, Lindsay, after being nearly starved in a loathsome dungeon, was sent into perpetual banishment ; ultimately he died of hunger and exposure in Holland.

As the hanging of some thousands of rebels would have shocked ordinary decency, vast numbers were condemned to be banished, as an act of grace, to the Plantations, or were 'made over as presents to trading courtiers, who might pardon them for 'a consideration.' Think of lords and ladies at court being presented with groups of convicts on whom money could be made by selling pardons ! The fact throws a very light on this period of English history. As regards transportation, Dr Doran gives some not uninteresting and little known particulars concerning Rob Roy. Twelve years after the rebellion of 1713, Rob was taken to London in connection with the Disarmament Act, and sentenced with many others to be transported to Barbadoes. Handcuffed to Lord Ogilvie, he was marched from Newgate through the streets of London to a barge at Blackfriars, and thence to Gravesend. 'This,' says Dr Doran, 'is an incident which has escaped the notice of Walter Scott and of all Rob's biographers.' Before quitting England, the barge-load of convicts were pardoned and allowed to return home.

Matters had considerably calmed down, when the country was startled with the rebellion which

broke out in 1745, headed by the young Chevalier, Charles Edward, grandson of James II. It was a daring and romantic adventure, but as badly conceived and supported as that of thirty years previously. No promised auxiliaries were supplied from France; and that the attempt to upset a powerful and settled government by a handful of adventurous Highlanders and the adherents of a few discontented noblemen and gentry should have ended disastrously, is not at all surprising. This fresh outbreak in the reign of George II. affords new material for the graphic pen of Dr Doran; and to his second volume we must refer for many painful though curious details concerning the treatment of the unfortunate prisoners. The manners of the more fashionable classes in the metropolis do not seem to have improved. We are told that 'people of fashion went to the Tower to see the prisoners as persons of lower quality went there to see the lions. Within the Tower, the spectator was lucky who saw Murray [of Broughton], Charles Ratcliffe, Lord Traquair, Lord Cromarty and his son, and the Lord Provost, at their respective windows. Lady Townshend, who had fallen in love with Lord Kilmarnock, at the first sight of "his falling shoulders," when he appeared to plead at the bar of the Lords, was to be seen under his window at the Tower.' The Lord Provost, here alluded to, was Archibald Stewart, who, known to be of Jacobite proclivities, was charged with culpable neglect of duty, in having allowed a party of Highlanders to rush in and take possession of Edinburgh. Stewart was tried and acquitted. Lord Cromarty's life was spared; but Lords Kilmarnock, Balmerino, and Lovat perished by beheading on Tower Hill. Lovat had expressed a passionate desire to be buried with his head in his own country in Scotland. The wish was gratified. His head was sewed on again by the undertaker before the body was despatched northwards! Lord Traquair was liberated.

The case of Charles Ratcliffe was peculiar. He was a younger brother of Lord Derwentwater who was executed in 1716, and he had himself only evaded the same fate at that time by being one of the prisoners who escaped from Newgate and took refuge in France. Assuming the title of Earl of Derwentwater, he was made prisoner in 1745, on board a French vessel on its way to Scotland with supplies for Prince Charles. The sentence of death which had been passed on him thirty years before was now raked up. He was condemned to be executed; and giving him the benefit of his assumed title of nobility, he was beheaded on Tower Hill, his manly courage and proud bearing not deserting him at the last dreadful scene.

Like Patten, in the former rebellion, Murray of Broughton, who had acted as secretary to Charles Edward, was saved by basely turning king's evidence, and sending many better men than himself to the scaffold. He retreated into private life under a deserved load of infamy. Years afterwards, as we learn from Lockhart, Murray, several times in disguise, visited Mr Scott, father of Sir Walter, for the sake of professional advice. On one of these occasions, Mrs Scott, from curiosity, intruded with the offer of a cup of tea, which Murray accepted. When he withdrew, Mr Scott lifted the window-shab, and threw the empty cup

into the street. The lady exclaimed for her china, but was silenced by the remark: 'I may admit into my house, on a piece of business, persons wholly unworthy to be treated as guests by my wife. Neither lip of me nor of mine comes after Mr Murray of Broughton.' As a memento of this curious incident, Sir Walter made prize of the saucer, which he preserved.

The executions of the untitled prisoners were conducted in a wholesale manner on Kennington Common, to which crowds flocked to see the hideous show. Drawers attended to supply wine to the culprits while the ropes were put round their necks, for the Jacobites drank treasonous toasts till the last. At one of these tragic ceremonies, 'Captain Wood, after the halter was loosely hung for him round his neck, called for wine, which was supplied with alacrity by the prison drawers. When it was served round, the captain drank to the health of the rightful king, James III.' The slight delay so caused, was lucky for another culprit, Captain Lindsay, who was coming up with a second batch. 'While the wine was being drunk, Lindsay was "halting," as the reporters called it. He was nice about the look of the rope, but just as he was courteously invited to get in and be hanged, a reprieve came for him, which saved his life.' At this period, London could not be deemed a pleasant place of residence for any one with delicate feelings. The entrances to the town were lined with decaying bodies hanging in chains. At length the sights became so offensive as to cause public remonstrance.

Dr Doran winds up his dramatic narrative with some graceful remarks on the altered state of feeling towards the Jacobites in the reign of George III. By the decease of Charles Edward in 1738, after having sunk to the character of a sot, the Jacobite fanaticism was considerably abated, and only lingered as an expiring sentiment till the death of Charles's brother, Henry, Cardinal York, 1807, when the house of Stuart was extinct.

It is pleasant to know that the royal family always spoke with sympathy of the Stuarts, Charles Edward, as is well known, was unhappy in his marriage with Louise, Countess of Albany, daughter of Count von Stolberg. She left him for a convent in 1780, and subsequently to his death became the wife of the Italian poet, Vittorio Alfieri. By a strange turn in the wheel of fortune, she sought an asylum in England, on the outbreak of the French Revolution, and was well received at the court in St James's Palace, the king and queen vying to do her honour. She went to see the king in the House of Lords with the crown on his head, when proroguing parliament, 1791. Hannah More speaks of seeing the Countess of Albany on that occasion seated among ladies 'just at the foot of the throne which she might once have expected to have mounted.' Finding London dull, with 'crowds but no society,' and that the climate of England did not suit her, she returned to the continent.

In his latter years Cardinal York was supported by a pension of four thousand pounds a year from George III.; an act of kindness which was handsomely responded to by the Cardinal giving up to the king the crown diamonds which James II. had carried away with him to France. On the death of the Cardinal, the Countess of Albany became the recipient of an

annuity from the king. This she enjoyed till her decease as plain Madame Faure at Montpellier, in France, in 1824. Such was the sorrowful ending of the broken-down and much-tried widow of Charles Edward Stuart.

We feel that our desultory sketch would be incomplete without some account of Borlum subsequent to his escape to France in 1716. For any such account, however, there are very slender materials in history. To a writer in the *Celtic Magazine* (Inverness, 1877) we are indebted for some of the following particulars. Borlum remained in France only one or two years, during which his father died, whereupon he became the chief of his house. On what terms, if any, he was allowed to return to his own country there is no statement. At all events, he was again in Scotland in 1719, for in that year he took part in the mad attempt at insurrection by the aid of Spanish soldiers, which was immediately stamped out. That Mackintosh of Borlum should have engaged in so wild an adventure, is an evidence of his Jacobite fervour and indiscretion. He was once more a fugitive, but for a time contrived to elude detection. At length, he was apprehended in the wilds of Cuthness, and was conveyed as a state prisoner to Edinburgh Castle.

Few, perhaps, among the gay crowds who throng Prince Street, and cast a glance at the buildings of the castle perched on the summit of rugged cliffs, are aware that in one of these buildings, long used as a state prison, poor Mackintosh of Borlum was confined for the last years of his life. Certainly, a hard fate for the old Jacobite! Cribbed and confined in his airy but miserable den, Borlum did not spend his time uselessly. Before being involved in political troubles he had devoted himself to the improvement and planting of lands. He is said to have planted a row of trees which still ornament the public road near Kingussie. Now that he was locked up, he wrote an Essay on the best means of inclosing and improving lands, which was printed in Edinburgh in 1729. Our authority adds: 'On the 7th January 1743, after a rough earthly pilgrimage of eighty years, the gallant old soldier passed to his rest, true to the last to the principles which had influenced his whole life. One of his last acts, it is said, was to dedicate one of his teeth to the service of his exiled master, by writing with it on the wall of his room an invocation of God's blessing on King James I.'

How long Borlum was immured in that dismal prison on the castle rock, is not clearly ascertained. The obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine* speaks of his having been confined in the castle 'fifteen years.' By the authority above quoted, he is said to have been imprisoned 'for nearly a quarter of a century.' Truth may lie somewhere between—from twenty to twenty-one years. The *Caledonian Mercury*, in noticing his decease at the age of 'about eighty-five,' gives him a high character as 'a complete gentleman, friendly, agreeable, and courteous; and for what he had written as regards the improvement of land, he is to be lastingly esteemed as 'a lover of his country.' Nowhere is a word said of the cruelty of confining so aged and accomplished a person in the worst species of prison till he was released by death. For the seeming harshness of this prolonged imprisonment, an excuse may perhaps

be found in the political apprehensions of the period; but this scarcely lessens our compassion for the sufferings of a man in so many respects estimable. With all his faults, Borlum must be admitted to have possessed that quality of earnestness of purpose which in the ordinary concerns of life is now so feebly demonstrated. It could be wished that some one had done full justice to his biography; for Borlum was undoubtedly one of the most extraordinary men of his time.

W. C.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XIX.—FIRE!

'THERE is nothing so hard, nothing so difficult as to get a governess nowadays,' said the Countess of Wolverhampton, quite unaware that she was but echoing the complaint of many ladies of a lesser degree, to the effect that it is next to impossible to procure pattern cooks, prize housemaids, exemplary seamstresses, or model kitchen-maids, in these degenerate times. 'I mean a really satisfactory governess of course,' added the noble mistress of High Tor. Lady Wolverhampton and her two elder daughters were the sole occupants of the smallest of the suite of drawing-rooms, the windows of which were yet open to admit the balmy air of the hot evening. Dinner was but just over, and the flush of the sinking sun was faintly visible on the heathly ridges and pine-groves to the west.

'It is very tiresome, mamma,' said sympathetic Lady Mand.

'It is more than tiresome,' rejoined the Countess. 'It makes me, on your sister's account, very anxious. If I had known, when Miss Grainger left us, how very long it would take to replace her, and that dear Alice would be for months at a stand-still so far as her education went, I should not have parted with her so readily.'

'But she left us because she was going to be married,' said Lady Gladys smiling; 'and we could not, I suppose, have forbidden the banns on account of the scarcity of good governesses. I wonder, by the way, how the scarcity can exist, when we are so perpetually informed that the governess market—a phrase which I don't like, suggesting as it does white slavery, involuntary servitude, and the auctioneer's hammer—is overstocked.'

'That sounds clever, Gladys,' answered Lady Wolverhampton in her plain way; 'but I am afraid that, like most elevating things, it proves nothing. I could get a highly certificated instructress, a person primed with information on particular subjects, warranted to be worth a handsome salary, a—'

'A teaching-machine, in fact,' suggested bright Lady Gladys, seeing that her mother hesitated for the lack of a word.

'Precisely. A teaching-machine,' resumed the Countess. 'But I don't want one. I wish Alice's governess, whoever she may be, to be a good sensible young woman, such as Miss Grainger was; and instead of that, all my correspondents write to me of the degrees and diplomas that have been taken out by those they recommend. I suppose I am an old-fashioned person, but I do wish—'

But before the Countess of Wolverhampton

could complete her discourse on the governess topic, the door was jerked open, and the old butler, who had permitted himself to turn the handle for once with such unconventional vivacity, stood gasping in the doorway with a face as white as his cravat.

'Why, Bugles!' began the Countess, rising in alarm; for that an ox should talk, as Livy tells us that a Roman representative of the bovine genus actually did, is scarcely more calculated to disturb the nerves than that a well-trained servant should crack the ice of his artificial decorum. The Earl, who was, like his wife, a partisan of old fashions, was lingering over his wine in the dining-room, and might of course be ill. Apoplexy was the first thought that rose, like a sheeted spectre, before the Countess's mind.

'Fire, my lady! Fire at High Tor; broke out sudden; and all the village is in flames!' panted out Bugles the butler, who was fat and short of breath. And without were to be vaguely heard other voices and the sound of running feet, and the cry, alarming above all others, of 'Fire! fire!' as grooms and gardeners forgot their usual respectful reticence in the first flush of the anticipated struggle with the direst foe of man and his works.

'There really is a fire, and I'm afraid a great one, to judge by the smoke and the sparks,' said Lord Harrogate, who at this juncture entered. 'My father has had his horse saddled already, and has started by this time for the village, and I am going too of course. I only came first to see if—'

'If we were ready to come too?' cried Lady Maud. 'To be sure we will, the moment we can get our hats. Gladys and I. Alice will stay with mamma. We can't work at putting out the fire, but we may be of use somehow.'

And in an incredibly short space of time the Ladies De Vere and their brother were hurrying down the steep road that led to the scene of the disaster. High Tor House, isolated and on a lofty spot of rising ground, was in no sort of peril from the fire raging beneath; but the indwellers of the great mansion were not disposed, like the divinities of the Pagan Olympus, serenely to contemplate the woes of the inhabitants of earth, and without waiting for orders, nearly every boy and man in the Earl's employ had hastened down to fight the common foe.

'The dry weather—unusually dry for this moist district, where the last thing we generally have to complain of is the want of rain—must help the fire sadly,' said Lord Harrogate, as the lodge-gates were left behind, and the lurid light of the conflagration became more and more distinctly visible through gaps in the high hedges that bordered the road. As they drew nearer, the eddying clouds of smoke, mingled with fiery dots here and there, the dull crimson glow, and the smothered sound of voices mingling with the roar of the flames and the clang of labour, gave unpleasant tokens of the mischief that was going on.

'I hoped at the first that the report was an exaggerated one, as most reports are,' said Lord Harrogate, as they came in sight of the burning house. 'But this is an ugly business. It is on one side of the street only, by good luck, that the fire is raging, and if we can keep it from spreading—'

The crash of a cottage roof tumbling in, and followed by a shower of sparks and small fragments of flaming wood, drowned the rest of the sentence. Matters were evidently bad enough, though not quite so bad as might have been augured from the first announcement of that herald of misfortune, Bugles the butler. The whole southern side of the long straggling street was more or less in flames; and to keep the fire from communicating itself to the houses on the opposite side of the road was a work which it itself taxed the strength of the whole adult male population to the utmost.

The noise, the smoke, the falling sparks, and the occasional plumping down into the dust of the road of some half-consumed scrap of woodwork, made Lord Harrogate's sisters, who were physically no braver than the average of their sex, shrink back aghast.

'Here, Maud!' cried her brother impatiently. 'We must not—or I must not—be drones in the hive. You know most of these good people—Mrs Prosser, for instance—Mrs Prosser, my sisters will stay with you while I go forward to bear a hand in getting the fire under—Where's my father? Ah, there he is, in the thick of the smoke!'

And there, sure enough, was dimly to be seen the well-known figure of the old Earl giving orders to such as were cool enough to hearken to them, whilst his frightened horse, held by a groom, stood at some distance. Darting through the clouds of suffocating vapour, which were dense enough to suggest the idea of a battle, Lord Harrogate reached the place where his father was standing.

'I don't see any fire-engines!' exclaimed the young man, looking with a sort of dismay at the chain of buckets passed from hand to hand. 'What, in the name of all that's wonderful, are the people dreaming of?'

'We have sent to Pebworth for help,' said the Earl, shaking his gray head; 'but before any arrives, if the wind freshens the houses will be mere cinder-heaps. As for the parish engine, Stickles here has got the same story to tell that is only too common among us in England here.'

And Stickles, who was the clerk, rubbed his hands apologetically together as he faltered out, in reply to Lord Harrogate's impatient question, the excuses which he had previously addressed to the Earl. The engine of which he was official custodian had been long out of repair, and was to have been 'seen to,' and should have been 'seen to' after harvest-time, had not the unfortunate outbreak of a very real and practical fire tested the unreadiness of the precautions for putting it out. As it was, the only available means of doing battle with the conflagration was the rude and simple one of flinging water on the flames, and at this task the inhabitants were busy enough. They were busier, however, before long, as, under the direction of Lord Harrogate, whom they respected, they began to tear down some portions of the burning buildings, in the hope of preventing the fire from spreading. A strange sight it was which the village street presented, encumbered as it was by chests and bedding and the poor furniture which had been hastily dragged out from the doors of cottages now blazing, and the wailing of frightened children, and the shrill voices of the women, blended with the hoarse deep roar of the triumphant flames.

'Tis a mercy, my lord, it broke out when it did,' said Charley Joyce, best bowler in the local cricket club and best woodman in the Earl's employment, and in both of these capacities well known to the Earl's heir. 'There'd ha' been a lot of us burned in our beds, if it had tarried till after midnight. All came,' he added, 'of that blessed rock-oil from Ameriky.'

Such indeed was the reported origin of the disaster. A girl, for milking purposes, had taken a tin lamp with her into a cowshed; the cow had kicked over the lamp, and the burning petroleum had set fire to the straw litter, whence the flames had mounted to the thatched roof. Thatched roofs, picturesque to look upon, were only too numerous for safety in that West-country village. The fire had crawled and darted, lithe as a serpent, from gable to porch and from palling to stable.

'There! Look at the school-house now!' cried a score of voices; and indeed the flames were pouring outwards through the shattered windows and licking the blackened walls, and withering the charred sticks the pretty hedge where the fragrant woodbine had clung so lovingly to the quickset, and scorched the very flowers in the garden.

'The fire began near about there,' remarked Joyce; but Lord Harrogate was already out of ear-shot, since his keen eye had caught a glimpse of a pale beautiful face, in the midst of the confusion of the crowded street. He pushed his way through the excited throng.

'You are not hurt, Miss Gray, I hope and trust!' he said, with an eagerness that surprised himself.

'No; but my house is burning,' said Ethel in reply; 'and I am a stranger, and— But pray, my lord, do not trouble yourself to—' For the young man had drawn her arm gently, but firmly through his.

'You must let me choose for you,' he said. 'My sisters are here, close by, at Mrs Prosser's, who keeps the village shop—a kind motherly old soul. I must leave you with them.'

Thus Ethel allowed herself to be led to the place where, amidst a knot of women, whose awe-stricken faces told how great was their interest in the spectacle, the Ladies De Vere stood watching the progress of the fire. Lord Harrogate did not linger for an instant, but went back to put heart into the men still battling with the encroaching flames.

It was no trifle, this hand-to-hand combat, as it were, with the fire; the fierce heat driving back the volunteers who ventured very near to the tottering walls to fling water upon the blazing timbers, while the blinding smoke rushed volleying out to blare the eyes and clog the lungs of the workers, and ever and anon some tall chimney or breached roof would fall with a crash, sending showers of bricks and half-consumed wood into the midst of the crowd; and hairbreadth escapes were many and bruises numerous.

At last, however, the two engines from Pebworth came clattering into the street, and water being in that region of streams ready to hand, and the wind happily abating, the fire was fairly conquered, and all further danger at an end. There was no loss of life; but some were singed and many bruised; while thirty humble homes had been turned to heaps of smouldering ruin, and household gear and clothing, snatched from

the flames, formed piles here and there in the wet road. Gradually the hospitality of this or that neighbour afforded temporary shelter to the crying children, the lamenting women, and the exhausted men; while a flying squadron of boys chased and led back captive the cows and pigs, the fowls and donkeys of those whose yards and sheds had been made desolate by the conflagration.

But what was Ethel to do? The old dame who served her had been readily received into the dwelling of a neighbour; and indeed nearly all of those so suddenly evicted had kindred, and all had friends to harbour them at this pinch. The young school-mistress looked forlorn indeed, as she stood alone in the midst of so many groups of voluble talkers.

'You must come home with us, Miss Gray,' said Lady Maud kindly; 'must come up to High Tor House, I mean,' she added, seeing that Ethel did not at first appear to comprehend her words, 'and stay with us until something can be done. It is the least we can do for you, burned out of house and home in this dreadful way, as you have been.'

Lady Gladys heartily seconded the invitation; but Ethel still hesitated until the Earl drew near.

'I have been telling Miss Gray here, papa, that we will take care of her at the House for a few days till she can look about her,' said Lady Maud.

'Quite right, my dear,' answered the Earl with his fatherly smile; and thus the matter was settled.

CHINA AND MAJOLICA.

This love of china-ware still continues to be a mania amongst certain classes in this country. In the houses chiefly of the 'upper ten,' we see scattered in lavish profusion little Dresden figures, shepherdesses and shepherdesses, sweet, fresh, smiling, fantastic little loves, leaning on impossible crooks, or ogling us from under trees whose bowery greenery embodies all that is idyllic in crockery. Wonderful little old tea-cups, without handles, transparent as an egg-shell, with no colouring to speak of, faded, washed-out looking, are prodigally pointed to as almost priceless. From these our great-grandmothers, in all the glories of hoops and furbelows, are said to have drunk their hyson and bohea in their great wainscoted and tapestried rooms, discoursing as they sipped the fragrant nectar, much as we their great-granddaughters do still, over our afternoon tea; for the world changes, but the human heart does not. All manner of vanities go the round; trivialities of dress or gossip; much tattling about the mote in our neighbour's eye, and a careful avoiding, with commendable modesty, any reference even the most remote to the beam in our own. These pale transparent cups going their oft-repeated rounds may have sown in their day the seeds of many a pathetic commonplace tragedy or comedy, disseminating as they circulated around the board, harmony and peace, or dissension and distrust.

Your true china collector has undoubtedly in him something of the antiquarian Dryascent spirit, which loves to excavate and unearth the buried treasures of the past; in his case, however, it is gracefully blended with and overhaid by an instinctive fondness for the tender, lovely, fragile object of his regard. He knows, for he has often anxiously weighed it, how frail it is. Every time

he looks at it he remembers the tumult of conflicting emotions with which, once secured, he packed it up with his own hands, and the fears for its ultimate safety which tempered the ecstatic pride of his triumph in the bargain which he had just struck.

To the china-hunter, every object in his cabinet or on his brackets is a trophy. That quaint old enamelled *tazza* of Lucca della Robbia's, he bought in Rome; and as he gazes at it he thinks not so much of the astute Jew dealer, for whom, as he flatters himself, his own knowledge was fully a match, but of a long-forgotten holiday, with its bright days of sunshine, and the lengthening purple shadows of night deepening over the skies, and the grapes in ripe clusters on the wall. How well he remembers their flavour still, and the hand that plucked them for the stranger, and the eyes that looked into his! What was her name? He has forgotten it. What her fate? He has never known. A most prosaic ending, truly, to a vanished romance. But her charming grace and beauty unforbidden, blend still in his memory like a sweet rhythmical chant, and beautify with a glory not altogether its own this rare old cup of Lucca della Robbia's.

With a sigh he turns from it to contemplate this old plate of mezza-majolica. Opal-hued, iridescent, it darts at him as he gazes upon it subtle flashes of blue and yellow and ruby-hued flame, rejoicing his soul with a deep unalterable conviction that it at least is real. He acquired it in Urbino, many, many years after he became the happy possessor of the Lucca della Robbia cup. He paid a full price for it too; but although a close man, he does not, and has never regretted the imprudence. At the sight of that beautiful plate, which he is pleased to call unique, his charmed heart melts away into softness, and his purse-strings begin to relax of their own accord. It moves his spleen to see careless visitors pass it by, as they sometimes do, to gaze at the soft beauty of that bright yellow-robed maiden, with dove upon her hand, who hovers self-forgetful upon the very verge of a pea-green china sea. The poor old quaint plate of mezza-majolica, gleaming there like a veritable jewel, is a treasure he jealously guards, and of its history we would say a few words.

The Italian enamelled earthenware which became famous under the name of Majolica, was first produced in 1300 in a town in the duchy of Urbino, which was under the feudal sway of the Malatestas, who were lords of Pesaro. Vessels of red clay such as had been long in use were covered with a thin coating of white earth obtained from the neighbourhood of Siena, and upon this ground different coloured patterns were traced. The vessels were then partly baked and covered with lead-glaze, after which they received a final firing. This delineation of coloured patterns upon an opaque white substance was the humble germ out of which the splendid many-hued majolica ware grew.

The colours employed were usually yellow, green, blue, and black; and the soft lead glaze, which was easily affected by external influences, imparted to the pottery that metallic iridescent lustre which is the special characteristic of majolica. To the Spanish Moors, this art was also well known; and some of their beautiful masterpieces finding their way into Italy, acted

as a fillip to the infant art, which long remained swathed in rude and ungraceful swaddling-bands. While it was in this transition state, a new tin glaze was discovered, and applied to terra-cotta bas-reliefs by the famous Lucca della Robbia, and the lordship of Pesaro was sold to the house of Sforza. The new feudal superiors took an extreme interest in the potteries, and granted such special privileges to the manufacturers, that in a short time they succeeded in making Pesaro famous for the production of majolica. Early specimens of the ware manufactured here are generally adorned with Moorish arabesques and coats of arms. Heads of saints are also a favourite study, and so are heathen goddesses; while heads of the popes and Dukes of Urbino abound, the name being affixed, to prevent all mistake as to the portrait.

In the pottery of the Pesaro manufactory, the outlines of the subjects are traced in black or blue, and are in general correctly drawn; but the figures are flat and hard, without a vestige of the breadth and freedom which give such admirable life and vigour to the etchings on the Greek vases; all faults in design or execution being atoned for by the marvellous beauty and finish of the glaze, whose iridescent splendour has been equalled but never surpassed by later artists. The most beautiful specimens of this ware are due to the genius of an obscure artist, whose very name has been forgotten, who flourished in Pesaro about 1480. The dishes he made were large and thick, and were intended not so much for use as for display; as is shewn by holes in a projection behind, through which strings were passed in order to suspend them from the wall. The colours he used were blue and yellow, and they shone with a rare and matchless mother-of-pearl splendour.

At the end of the fifteenth century tin enamel had come into general use, and the potteries of the duchy of Urbino had begun to manufacture a finer majolica ware. The art may be said to have reached its most palmy period. The finest qualities of the old mezza-majolica were retained in the new manufacture, and far greater artistic skill was displayed in the painting and ornamentation. The town of Gubbio acquired a world-wide fame by the beauty of its lustrous majolica; and in the year 1435, Georgio Andreoli, a gentleman of Pavia, was attracted to it. He was a painter and sculptor by profession; and his majolica plates, glowing like jewels with the richest and most brilliant colours, are still famous. He excelled in the use of ruby red and golden yellow, and his ware is generally encircled by a brilliant flame-coloured border. He delights also in the picturesque effect produced by gold arabesques on a ground of vivid blue. His period of greatest activity was from 1486 to 1537. To china-fanciers he is known as the famous Maestro Georgio of Gubbio, and his works now command almost incredible prices. He is charged with having made a secret of his metallic lustre, and with having travelled about the country selling his recipes to the highest bidder; but for this charge there is no good ground. His brothers and his son worked along with him, and they had many assistants, to whom all the processes of the manufacture were known. In the city of Urbino, where Raphael was born, the manufacture of majolica ware was carried on with great spirit and success. Among the foremost of the

ceramic artists of Urbino was a certain Orazio Fontana. His designs, which are characterised by great freedom and breadth of style, and truth and fidelity of drawing, are likewise brilliantly coloured and admirably glazed. One of his masterpieces, a magnificent cup, in the possession of Baron Rothschild, has his name inscribed upon it; a frequent practice with the great Italian potters.

All over the duchy of Urbino, potteries of this ware flourished at Gubbio, at Pesaro, at Urbino, and at Castel Durante. From these workshops potters travelled with their secrets to other parts of Italy and also to Flanders. The majolica of Castel Durante is very beautifully finished; and one of its principal manufacturers, Piccolo Passo, wrote a treatise upon the art of making and decorating majolica.

Faenza, which has given its name in France to all soft pottery, also produced much beautiful majolica ware. The Faenza majolica has, like that of Urbino, a rich marzacotta glaze, and some of the more ancient specimens are enamelled in berettino, a pale-blue tint. The later Faenza majolica is in style very like that of Urbino; decorative and embossed embellishments are laid aside, and pictorial designs are generally used.

Such is a brief sketch of an art for which Raphael and Marc Antonio did not disdain to furnish compositions, and whose masterpieces not only found ready access into palaces, but were presented to churches and hung up in cathedrals during the middle ages as votive offerings to saints.

MR ASLATT'S WARD.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

SOME years ago I was brought by reverse of fortune to form one of that vast number of women in search of employment, the thought of whom makes one's heart ache as one looks at their numerous applications for situations in the columns of our daily papers. I had long been an orphan, but not a penniless one, till a great bank-failure, such as have from time to time brought so much misery and embarrassment upon the middle classes of society, swept away my little all, and left me entirely dependent upon my own exertions for future maintenance.

As the shock conveyed by the news of my loss passed away, I was not in utter despair. I had been well educated, was a tolerable musician, and had travelled much; so it seemed to me that I should have no difficulty in finding a situation as companion or governess; and I strove hard to conquer my natural shrinking from the unpleasantness of such a life, and to become reconciled to my altered position. Friends promised to help me, and for a time I depended upon their promises. But finding that no situation was forthcoming through their efforts, I determined to try the effect of an advertisement in the *Times*. I composed it with care, endeavouring to set my qualifications in their best light, and felt sanguine as to the result. I expected to have at least a dozen responses, and was disappointed at receiving only two. The first letter I opened was in a woman's handwriting, and con-

sisted of a string of impertinent queries, linked to a statement of the writer's requirements in the governess she engaged for her daughters—requirements which I felt sure I could never fulfil; winding up with a request that if I felt equal to the demands of the situation, I would call at a certain address in the neighbourhood of Regent's Park. Such a letter checked my expectations, and with some impatience I destroyed it. The next was very different. It was a courteously worded note from a gentleman, informing me that he was seeking a governess, or rather companion, for his ward, a girl of eighteen; and would be glad to have an interview with me, if I would kindly make such arrangements for one as would suit my convenience. The tone of his letter pleased me, and as he gave the address of an hotel not far from the part of London where I was then residing, I immediately wrote a reply, naming an hour at which on the following day I would call upon him.

It was with not a little trepidation that I set out the next morning to fulfil my engagement. I had the vaguest ideas of what I ought to do or say in the new position in which I found myself, and for which my previous experience had ill prepared me. My heart sunk within me as I inquired for Mr Aslatt, and was conducted by a waiter to his private room. Would the stranger be a very formidable personage? I wondered. The first glance at him was reassuring. A more benevolent countenance I have never seen; and his tall stately figure and genial though dignified manner, enhanced the pleasing impression it created. He was not a young man; but so bright was the lustre of his steel-blue eyes, so full of life and energy their glance, and his words and actions so quick and lively, that no one would have thought of calling him old, although his black hair was streaked with gray, and his brow somewhat lined by the cares and sorrows which come to all as the years pass on. My fears vanished at his kind reception, and I at once felt at my ease.

'I do not know whether the services I require will be to your mind, Miss Bygrave,' he said; 'but your duties will be very light. I wish to obtain a sympathetic companion rather than governess for my ward, Rose Sinclair, a young lady of most lovable disposition, though high-spirited and, I fear I must add, rather wilful. The fact is she has lived with me ever since she was a little child, and perhaps has been made too much of—spoiled a little, you know. But she is so engaging, so artless, so affectionate, no one could bear to deny her anything. She has had masters and governesses in abundance, but they have seldom known how to manage her. She requires very careful treatment; she may be led and guided, but she will not be ruled. She has very good abilities, but is averse to application. I have released her from regular study; but I should be glad if you could persuade her to read with you, and practise her music and painting, for both of which she has rare talent. Her position is a lonely one; she has no one to depend on but me; and I am most anxious to find for her a companion who might prove a friend also. If you will excuse such a remark from a stranger, I will add that your appearance encourages me to hope that you would prove such a one, if you were willing to try.'

Although Mr Aslatt offered me a far larger

salary than I could have expected, and assured me of his desire that everything should be done to make me comfortable and at home in his house. I hesitated for some time before I accepted the situation, for I rather doubted my ability to control a high-spirited spoiled girl of eighteen. Her guardian's partiality for her evidently led him to think lightly of the difficulties of the post he offered me.

'I think you cannot fail to be pleased with my ward,' he continued; 'she is of such a noble disposition, so generous and gracious; but as I have said before, she needs to be gently checked, and prevented from following all the impulses of her young and ardent nature. I do not think you would find much difficulty in managing her, if you once succeeded in gaining her affection.'

'But if I were not so fortunate?' I said inquiringly.

Mr Aslatt smiled, and slightly shrugged his shoulders. 'I do not think we need fear that alternative,' he replied pleasantly. 'But should my hopes be disappointed, and the position prove distasteful to you, you will be perfectly at liberty to resign it whenever you please.'

I thanked him, and after a little more discussion agreed to undertake the office of companion to his ward.

Early in the following week I quitted London, and proceeded to Westwood Hall, as Mr Aslatt's residence was named, a large country house, situated in a neighbourhood not many miles from the metropolis. I found a carriage waiting for me at the quiet little station where I alighted from the train. After a pleasant drive through pretty country lanes, where the trees often met overhead, we passed through some large iron gates, beside which stood a picturesque lodge, and drove through an avenue of elms to an old-fashioned mansion in red brick. The building formed three sides of a square, and in the space thus inclosed were flower-beds of various shapes, brilliant with many-hued flowers; and in the centre stood an antique sun-dial upon a carved stone base, round which, as I afterwards noted, ran in distinct letters the motto, 'Time is short; Death is nought; Love is all.' I had scarcely time to notice the general surroundings of the place, before the carriage stopped at the large oaken door.

Mr Aslatt had apparently been on the look-out for it; for he met me with a cordial greeting before I crossed the threshold, and led me into a large oak-panelled hall which formed the centre of the house. It was a curious apartment. The floor, ceiling, tables, chairs, settee, were all of oak, and most elaborately carved. The walls were decorated with banners, shields, swords, helmets, and various old family relics. Everything was old; and I felt for a moment as if I had been suddenly transported from the nineteenth century, and carried back into the middle ages. But though the oaken furniture was dark with age, the hall did not strike me as gloomy, perhaps because immediately on entering, my eyes rested on the one bright object it contained. A girl was seated upon the settee, whose bright golden hair and dress of pale blue made a delightful spot of colour amidst the prevailing sombreness. A large black dog of rather forbidding aspect, crouched at her feet, but sprang up as I entered, and began to bark furiously. 'Quiet, Nero; quiet, sir!' said

the young lady, without rising, while regarding me with an intenceness which made me flush.

'Rose, this is Miss Bygrave,' said her guardian; and at his word she rose and moved slowly across the polished floor to meet me, still surveying me calmly and coolly with her large blue eyes, as if anxious to arrive at a correct estimate of my character and qualifications. She was tall and womanly in figure, but wore her long golden hair in a cloud over her neck and shoulders, merely confined by a ribbon, as a child's might have been. Though a beautiful girl, she appeared unconscious of the fact. Her regular clear-cut features were expressive of self-reliance and determination, without being in the least harsh or unfeminine. Her manner was perfectly self-possessed, and her bearing slightly haughty; but it was not long before I discovered that underneath that appearance of womanly dignity there was the simplicity and waywardness of a very child.

'How do you do, Miss Bygrave?' she said somewhat coldly, giving me her hand, and scanning my face with a deliberation which I should have resented from any one else, but to which I now submitted humbly, as if it had been the right of the proud young beauty who stood before me. Then as if the result of her scrutiny were satisfactory, she added more graciously: 'I darsay you are tired with your long drive; come, and I will shew you to your room.'

I followed her up the wide staircase and along a corridor to a room overlooking the extensive garden which lay at the back of the house. I was much pleased with the appearance of my bedroom. From what I had seen down-stairs I was prepared for an oaken chamber hung with tapestry, with gloomy recesses, hearse-like bed, and ancient furniture. Nothing of the kind, however, met my view. Here everything was modern, and even luxurious, and in such style as would have suited the most fastidious taste.

'I hope you will be comfortable here,' said Miss Sinclair.

'It will be my own fault if I am not,' I replied, as I advanced to the window opening on to a small veranda, from which steps led down into the garden. 'How pretty the garden looks!' I remarked. 'I shall often feel inclined to walk there, I fancy.'

'You must not think of going there after sunset,' said Miss Sinclair decidedly.

'Why not?' I asked in surprise.

'Because—— Well, perhaps I ought not to mention it, for my guardian does not like it talked about; and yet you would be sure to hear of it some time or other, so I may as well tell you at once. The truth is the house is haunted; not this part, but the left corridor, where the rooms are very, very old. And the ghost has been seen coming out of the window of the Blue Chamber—which communicates with the garden, as this does—and going down the steps.'

I was astonished at the gravity with which she made this statement.

'You do not surely believe in ghosts, Miss Sinclair?' I asked. 'You cannot really credit such stories?'

She turned from me impatiently, saying: 'It is easy for you to doubt their existence; perhaps if you had seen what I have, you would think differently.'

'What have you seen?' I inquired.

But offended by my scepticism on the subject, the young lady did not choose to reply. She drew herself up proudly, and after inquiring if there was anything I needed, left me to make my toilet.

Vexed with myself for having so soon given offence to my charge, I strove for the rest of the day to ingratiate myself with her; nor were my efforts unsuccessful.

'I think I shall like you,' she said frankly; 'that is, if you do not interfere with me too much. I was dreadfully put out when Cousin told me you were coming, for I like to be sole mistress here. By the way, how do you like my guardian? I always call him Cousin, although I do not at all understand how we are related to each other. I know nothing of my parents, except that they died when I was a very little child. Cousin has promised to tell me about them some day; but he looks so grave whenever I refer to them, that I fancy there must be something painful for me to learn concerning my parentage, and therefore I do not intend to ask any more questions. But you have not told me how you like Mr Aslatt.'

I was amused at her eager curiosity, and told her that although I had had so little opportunity of judging, I had received a most favourable impression of her guardian's character and disposition.

She seemed pleased with my reply. 'You can have no idea how good he is,' she said. 'But he is a man of strong prejudices, and it is hard to move him when he has once made up his mind with regard to any person or thing. Not that I mean to find fault with him, for as far as I am concerned I have not the least cause of complaint. I cannot tell you how kind he is to me, or how much I owe him. He is the best old darling in the world!'

'He is surely not so very old,' I remarked, smiling at her enthusiasm.

'Don't you think so?' returned she. 'He seems quite old to me; but of course you are much older than I am, and therefore judge differently of age. Would you mind telling me how old you are? I know it is very rude of me to ask, but I always seem to do what I ought not.'

I laughed, and informed her that I was in my twenty-eighth year.

'Nearly ten years older than I am,' she remarked, 'and fourteen years younger than Mr Aslatt; so you see he really is old!'

'Not old for a man,' I ventured to say.

'Yes; he is,' contradicted my companion impatiently, shaking back her golden hair.

At this moment Mr Aslatt entered the room in which we were sitting. 'I have just been thinking, Rose,' he said, 'that if it is fine to-morrow, we might ride over to Ashdene. I dare say Miss Bygrave would like to see the old Priory there.—Are you fond of riding?' he added, addressing me.

It was long since I had been in the saddle; but in earlier years I had exceedingly enjoyed the exercise, and I told him so.

'Then I hope you will enjoy a ride to-morrow,' he said. 'I think I have a horse that you will like, and Rose will lend you a riding-habit.'

I thanked him heartily; but Rose said decidedly: 'I cannot go to Ashdene to-morrow; you forget that it is my day for visiting the school.'

Mr Aslatt's face changed, and a look passed across it, which I should have called a look of pain had not the cause been so trivial. 'Surely, you need not go to the school to-morrow, Rose,' he said gently; 'your visit is not of so much importance, but that Mr Hammond can manage without you for once.'

Rose's face crimsoned and her lip pouted, but she made no reply; and Mr Aslatt hastily introduced another subject of conversation. But her brightness was gone for the rest of the evening; she replied shortly and coldly to her guardian's remarks, and flatly refused to sing when he asked her to do so. It was evident that her conduct grieved him, for the look of pain was more clearly visible; but he shewed no sign of resentment, and the tone in which he bade her good-night was as affectionate as if her behaviour had been all that he could have desired.

'This is the way to the haunted room,' said Rose as we went up to bed together, opening as she spoke a door at the top of the draughty staircase. She raised her lamp, so that its light rendered visible the gloom of the dreary corridor. The air which met us had a close musty smell; and the grotesque figures carved on the oak panels, with the sculptures in the distance casting dim shadows on the opposite wall, had rather a weird appearance in the uncertain light. Suddenly a door creaked on its hinges, and Rose sprang back, uttering a faint cry, and hastily closed the door which communicated with this passage. 'Did you hear that?' she asked in an awe-struck whisper.

'Why, you silly girl,' I said laughingly, 'what you heard was only the effect of the wind!'

She shook her head unbelievably, and replied: 'Well, remember, I warn you to shun that part of the house, especially when night is coming on.'

The next morning, at an early hour, the horses were brought to the door, and Mr Aslatt, Rose, and I started for Ashdene. Rose had made no further opposition to the expedition, and there was no trace of vexation on her lovely face as we rode off. She looked remarkably well in her riding costume. The close-fitting habit of dark-blue cloth shewed to advantage the exquisite symmetry of her figure; and the little velvet hat, whose sole ornament was a heron's plume, was very becoming to the fair face. She was an accomplished rider, and controlled admirably, without the least appearance of effort, the spirited movements of the beautiful animal she rode. It was a bright May morning, and the ride was most enjoyable. About noon we reached the little town of Ashdene, where we dismounted; and after partaking of some luncheon at the hotel, proceeded to view the ruins of the old Priory. Here we found so much to interest us that the afternoon was far advanced before we were ready to return. As we were walking our horses up a hill not very far from home, I saw a young man coming towards us dressed in a gray tweed suit. As he came into view, Mr Aslatt urged his horse into a canter; but Rose checked hers as it quickened its pace, and said reproachfully: 'The horses are tired, cousin; we must not hurry them up this hill!'

As the young man drew near, he raised his hat. 'Good afternoon, Hammond,' said Mr Aslatt, rather stiffly I thought.

How it happened I don't know, but just then

Rose dropped her riding-whip, and it fell within a few feet of Mr Hammond. He picked it up in a moment, and handed it to the young lady, who thanked him most graciously, and even bent down from her saddle to shake hands with him. 'I was so sorry to be absent from my post to-day, Mr Hammond,' she said; 'but we were tempted to take advantage of this fine day for a ride to Ashdene.'

'It was a great disappointment to the scholars not to see you,' he replied; 'but they have no cause to complain, for it is so seldom you are absent. I think you are if possible too devoted to their welfare.'

'That is my opinion too, Mr Hammond,' interrupted my employer; 'and you must not be surprised if for the future you do not see Miss Sinclair so frequently at the school.'

'I trust that will not be the case,' exclaimed Rose indignantly. 'I see no necessity for changing my habits.' She looked quite angry as she spoke, and I felt sorry for Mr Aslatt, he seemed so agitated.

Mr Hammond smiled complacently at Rose's remark, and there was something almost supercilious in his manner as he bade Mr Aslatt 'Good afternoon'; but the bow and parting glance he bestowed upon his ward were most deferential in their admiring homage. As we pursued our way in silence, the expression of Rose's face plainly shewed that she considered herself injured.

Mr Hammond was a good-looking young man, apparently about thirty, though he might have been older. Good-looking though he was, his countenance did not impress me favourably. His dark eyes had a hard look, in spite of their fine shape and lustrous hue, and there were faint indications of self-indulgence in the curves of his mobile mouth. His manner was easy and suggestive of conceit; in short, his appearance inspired me with distrust. Perhaps the want of cordiality which Mr Aslatt's manner betrayed, contrasting so vividly with Rose's gracious greeting, may have given rise to this feeling on my part.

Rose kept up an appearance of offended dignity during dinner-time and as long as she remained in Mr Aslatt's presence. But as we were strolling in the garden after dinner, she suddenly asked me what I thought of Mr Hammond. Guessing that she had a great liking for that individual, I was guarded in my reply to her query, merely reminding her how impossible it was to form a just estimate of anybody in such a brief interview.

'Did you notice how rudely Mr Aslatt spoke to him?' she next inquired.

'I observed that he seemed impatient of the interruption,' I replied; 'but I do not think his words were rude.'

'I believe he hates Mr Hammond,' she said quickly. 'You cannot think how unjust he is to him. You know Mr Hammond is the village schoolmaster. There was no school in the village many years ago, when Mr Aslatt came to reside here, so he built a very nice school-house at his own expense (I must take you to see it to-morrow), and promised always to make up the master's salary to a certain sum. For years I have been accustomed to go in and out the school whenever I like; and when I asked to be allowed to give the children a weekly singing lesson, Mr Aslatt made no objection, indeed he seemed pleased for me to

do so. But since old Mr Green died, and Mr Hammond succeeded him, he has changed his mind on the subject, and can't bear me to go to the school-house. At first he seemed to like Mr Hammond so much; but lately he has taken a decided dislike to him; though what poor Mr Hammond has done to call forth such a feeling, I cannot imagine. Cousin has tried to persuade me to give up my visits to the school; but that I am resolved not to do, and I have told him so. He also tried to get my consent to our removing to London for the season; but I would not agree to that. So then he could not rest till he had got a companion for me. I made no opposition to that plan, although I did not like the idea, for I saw he had set his mind upon it, and I could not bear to vex him. He is so good to me, and I am not altogether ungrateful, though I do behave so naughtily. I know you thought my conduct very bad at dinner-time, for you looked so dreadfully grave.'

She glanced up at me as she spoke with such a pretty air of deprecation, so like a petted child, that I could not find heart to scold her. Indeed her captivating ways so fascinated me, that although I saw much to disapprove, I was disposed to be very lenient towards her faults.

SELLS.

It would puzzle a philologist to give an exact definition of the 'sell.' Nearly related to the hoax, it differs from it in being more innocent in its inception and less mischievous in its consequences. Some little ingenuity is required to concoct a happy 'sell'; but any one may perpetrate a hoax who is equal to 'lending a lie the confidence of truth.' The latter is a deliberately planned deception, oftenest attaining its end by personation or forgery or something closely akin to it; whereas a sell needs no such playing with edged tools, and may not only be unpremeditated, but even unintentional.

The Irishman who undertook to shew an exciseman a private still, and introduced him to his brother, who had been twelve years in the army and was a private still, sold the guardian of the revenue very neatly; although it is possible the victim of the joke did not see the fun of the thing, any more than the official of the North London Railway Company did, when, overhearing a third-class passenger aver that any one could travel from Broad Street to Dalston Junction without a ticket, as he had done only the day before, he interviewed him when he alighted. The traveller not proving communicative, the zealous railway servant conveyed a coin into his hand, and then asked: 'How did you go from Broad Street to Dalston Junction yesterday without a ticket?' 'Oh,' was the unwelcome reply, 'I walked!'

As readily trapped was the amateur musician who responded to the advertisement: 'Wanted, a trombone-player for Barnum's Balcony Band,' by waiting upon the famous showman without delay.

'You want a trombone-player?' inquired he.

'Yes,' said Mr Barnum.

'What is the place worth?' asked the applicant.
'Oh, about twenty-five dollars a week, I suppose.'

'Very well, I should like it.'

'All right,' said Mr Barnum; and the trombone did frightful execution through the week. Saturday came, and with it Mr Green for his salary, instead of drawing which, he received a paper on which was written: 'Mr Green to Mr P. T. Barnum.—To playing the trombone on his Balcony one week, twenty-five dollars.' The recipient smiled.

'It's all right, isn't it?' asked Mr Barnum.

'Why,' said the musician, 'you've made an odd mistake: you've made me the debtor instead of you.'

'No mistake at all,' said Barnum. 'You see, this is how it is. There are a good many gentlemen in this city fond of practising on brass instruments; but they cannot do so at home because of their neighbours' objections. So I find them room on my Balcony during so many hours a day, where the street is so noisy that it does no harm; and they give me so much a week for my trouble in keeping the organisation complete. You don't think me such a fool as to pay such a wretched lot of players surely? However, as you seem to have been honestly mistaken, you can pay me ten dollars this week; but hereafter I can make no reduction.' There was a vacancy in the Balcony Band the following Monday.

We take it that the shrewd showman was not quite so much astonished at the way his advertisement was misconstrued, as one A. B., who, recognising a long-lost friend in the stalls of the theatre, but unable to catch his eye, notified in the 'agony' column of the *Times*: 'If the gentleman who was in the stalls at the — Theatre on the evening of the 5th inst. will write to the following address, he will hear from the Box above,' and received nearly a score of replies. The first he opened, ran: 'MY DEAR MADAM—I cannot express to you how delighted I felt this morning on taking up the *Times* and reading your advertisement. How exceedingly kind and thoughtful of you to communicate with me in this way. Pray, let me know as quickly as possible when and where I may see you. I am burning with impatience to speak to you. Can we meet this evening? Do send me a note, or better still, a telegram, here, on receipt of this.—Yours Most Affectionately.' The second letter, commencing 'Miss Garrison,' suggested a meeting at the Duke of York's Column, and ended: 'Good-bye, yet Yours ever and a day—The Gentleman in the Stalls.' A third deluded mortal declared he had not slept a wink after seeing A. B. at the theatre. 'You know Who' informed the 'Dearest Being,' whose himage he still saw before him, that his passion was much too much for ordinary words to tell; that after wandering all his life, mixing in revolutions, &c., he should like to stop at last, and finished somewhat prosaically with: 'It's just four o'clock. All are in bed and fast asleep. Good-night. I'm not married.' And so on with a batch of other aspirants, who evidently deemed the anonymous occupant of the Box nothing short of an address.

Many an unpremeditated sell has been perpetrated from inability to resist sudden temptation. One of the judges of the Supreme Court of New York state, visiting the Centennial Exhibition, sat down in a quiet corner apart from the others, to listen to a great cornet-player, and as was his wont in court, drew his gray coat about his head and ears as a protection against possible draughts. His motionless figure soon attracted attention; and the whisper ran that it was the statue of some wonderful character. The judge's sister wickedly told those near her that they were gazing at the effigy of an Aztec priestess from Mexico. The information passed from mouth to mouth, and some hundreds of people were drawn to the spot, to disperse somewhat sheepishly when the object of their curiosity, having had enough of the cornet, readjusted his coat and rose to go.

A good story is told of one Boggs, whose impertinent curiosity was 'proverbial throughout the country that owned him. He was on one occasion travelling on the Little Miami Railroad alongside a solemn-looking man, who persisted in looking out of window and took no heed of Boggs' endeavours to enliven the journey with a little conversation. At last the brakeman or guard came round with some water, and the unsociable traveller turned round to take a drink. Seizing the chance, Boggs asked: 'Going as far east as New York?'

'No,' grunted the man.

'Ah!' said Boggs, 'New York is still this time of year; methue you're striking for Philadelphia?'

The surly one shook his head.

'Praps Cleveland's your destination?' insinuated Mr Boggs. 'No? Can't be going this round-about way to Chicago?'

No reply was vouchsafed.

'Well,' cried Boggs despairingly, 'I s'pose you've no objection to telling where you are going?'

'Well sir,' exclaimed the man, 'I'm going for seven years!'

Then the deputy-sheriff said he would rather not have folks talking to his prisoners, and Boggs gave in.

This puts us in mind of Mark Twain's anecdote of Artemus Ward and a travelling bore, between whom the following amusing colloquy took place: 'Did you hear that last thing of Horace Greeley?'

'Greeley, Greeley, Horace Greeley; who is he?'

said Artemus.

Five minutes elapsed, then came: 'George Francis Train is making a good deal of disturbance over in England; do you think they will put him in prison?'

'Train, Train, George Francis Train,' said Artemus solemnly; 'I never heard of him.'

The tormentor tried another tack; he said: 'What do you think about Grant's chance for the Presidency?'

'Grant, Grant?—Why man!' said Artemus, 'you seem to know more strangers than any one I ever saw.'

The man took a walk up the car; coming back, he said: 'Well, you ignoramus, did you ever hear of Adam?'

The humorist looked up and said: 'Adam? What was his other name?'

The journey henceforth was made in peace. Very nicely sold were a couple of tramps who waylaid a wealthy farmer in Louisa County, Iowa,

and demanded his money or his life. Disinclined to part with either, he took to his heels. They chased him half a mile down the roughest of lanes, dashed after him through a briar-hedge, and went pattering across an old corn-field. Then the chased one struck for the woods, and went wheezing up a steep hill; his pursuers pressing closely behind with blood-shot eyes and shortened breath. The farmer dashed across a forty-acre stubble-field, across a frozen creek, through a blackberry patch, down a ravine, over another hill, across a stump-field, to be run down on the road by the tramps. They overhauled him thoroughly, searched him from top to toe, to find he had not a solitary cent wherewith to reward them for their perseverance.

Our concluding example relates to an affecting romance told by the *Detroit Free Press*. It was the second time that the hero of the story had accompanied the young lady home from one of those little social parties which are got up to bring fond hearts a step nearer to each other. When they reached the gate, she asked him if he wouldn't come in. He said he would. Sarah took his hat, told him to sit down, and left the room to remove her things. She was hardly gone before her mother came in, smiled sweetly, and, dropping down beside the young man, said: 'I always did say that if a poor but respectable young man fell in love with Sarah, he should have my consent. Some mothers would sacrifice their daughters' happiness for riches, but I am not of that sort.'

The young man started with alarm; he didn't know whether he liked Sarah or not; he hadn't dreamed of marriage.

'She has acknowledged to me that she loves you,' continued the mother; 'and whatever is for her happiness is for mine.'

The young man stammered out: 'I—I haven't'

'Oh, never mind! Make no apology. I know you haven't much money, but of course you'll live with me. We'll take in boarders, and I'll be bound that we'll get along all right.'

It was a bad situation. He hadn't even looked love at Sarah. 'I had no idea of'—he began; when she held up her hands saying: 'I know you hadn't; but it's all right. With your wages and what the boarders bring in, we shall get along as snug as possible. All I ask is that you be good to her; Sarah has a tender heart, and if you should be cross and ugly, it would break her down in a week.'

The young man's eyes stood out like cocoa-nuts in a shop-window, and he rose up and tried to say something.

'Never mind about the thanks,' she cried; 'I don't believe in long courtships. The eleventh of January is my birthday, and it would be nice for you to be married on that day.'

'But—but—but'—he gasped.

'There, there! I don't expect any speech in reply,' she laughed. 'You and Sarah settle it to-night, and I'll advertise for twelve boarders straight away. I'll try to be a model mother-in-law. I believe I'm good-tempered and kind-hearted, though I did once follow a young man two hundred miles and shoot off the top of his head for agreeing to marry my daughter and then quitting the county.' She patted him on the head and called out. And now the young man wants advice. He wants to know whether he had

better get in the way of a locomotive or slide off the wharf. If ever a young bachelor was 'sold,' Sarah's young man was in that predicament.

ELEPHANT GOSSIP FROM RANGOON.

We have much pleasure in laying before our readers the following interesting particulars regarding the elephant, and the way in which the physical strength of that sagacious animal is turned to account in the timber-trade of Rangoon. The notes are contained in a letter from a resident in that town to his brother in England, who has kindly placed it at our disposal. After describing some phases of every-day social life, the writer thus proceeds: 'The elephants I go daily to see are beauties, fine powerful well-trained animals, and strange to say, the *mahout* (driver) of one of them is an old servant of my own. It is both interesting and amusing to watch them working the timber. The government have nine elephants employed at the depot; and there are other animals belonging to natives at work there also. I often take my seat on a teak-log, picking out the cleanest and softest for the purpose, light a cheroot, and watch the performance. Elephants are pretty much like men; I don't mean in personal appearance, but in character. I can pick out "characters I have met" quite easily among the group of sixteen or eighteen all working there together sometimes. There are willing workers, and there are skulkers; there are gentle tempers, and there are others "as dour as a door-nail." Some of them will drag a log two tons in weight without a groan; while others, equally powerful but less willing, will make a dreadful fuss over a stick that is, comparatively speaking, nothing.

'There are a good many female elephants employed. Some belong to the government; but most of them are owned by Karens, who bring them in from the jungle when work is obtainable. They are not so powerful as the males; and the want of tusks is rather against them, because they have to do the pushing or "unging" part of the work, as the natives call it, with their trunks. These they roll up in a coil, and just at the place where the trunk and the head unite, they press against the log and roll it over.

'I saw the legs very nearly knocked from under a man two days ago by a lively female who was rolling over a log in this way. She had discovered by experience that it was easier to move a heavy log by a violent jerk than by slow steady pushing; and when the man on her neck called out "Oung!" and pushed her ear forward with his foot—the equivalents in elephant-driving for "Go along, old lady!"—she stood for a moment motionless, then in an instant up coiled the trunk, down went the head, and away rolled the log, one end of it coming round with a sweep which all but made an "Aunt Sally" of the innocent spectator. He sprang from the ground as if he had received an electric shock, and saved himself; after which he received the congratulations of the by-standers for being an ass to stand in the way of an elephant like that.

'I think the females do a little flirting sometimes when they see a handsome stately *tusker* working near them. A little one came in from the jungle the other day, and was working away with admir-

able diligence near the place where my largest elephant was engaged dragging logs. He is really a noble-looking animal, with immense tusks that almost touch the ground when his head is in repose. There is a dignified air about all his movements too which must be very captivating with the other sex. Sometimes the two passed very near each other, and I noticed when this happened that the little lady from the jungle gave utterance to certain peculiar sounds. The only good imitation of them which I can think of at the moment is that strange medley of incoherences which a coriopean is sometimes made to produce when beginners get up steam. Such sounds, for instance, as I have heard proceeding from the house of a neighbour of yours, when I have been enjoying a pipe in the garden on a summer afternoon. At first I thought they were the promptings of fear; but an elephant under these circumstances generally becomes impatient with the driver, thumps his trunk upon the ground and "trumpets." It was simply a little flirtation, a tender long-drawn-out elephantine kiss thrown at my noble friend.

"The highly trained male elephants with tusks manage the "ounging," part of their work very skilfully. The trunk is used as a pad or buffer between the ivory and the wood, and the pushing is done steadily. An average log weighs about a ton and a half. When it has to be pushed into the river, the elephant feels the end of it with his trunk, and having ascertained where he can place his tusks with most advantage, he adjusts the buffer, and starts off pushing the log steadily before him. Should it happen to be an extra-heavy one, he stops occasionally to take breath; and as it slides down the muddy bank towards the water, he gives it a finishing slap, as if to say: "There, you're afloat at last!" Sometimes the logs are awkwardly jammed up together, so that the ends have to be raised in order to get the dragging-chains fastened. This he does by putting his tusks underneath; and passing his trunk over the log to keep it steady, lifts it up to the required height. When it is a very heavy lift, he will go down on his knees to get a better purchase. He stacks the timber most skilfully also by lifting the end of the log as much as nine or ten feet in this manner, places it on the top of the pile, then goes to the other end and pushes it forward till he gets it quite flush with the rest. In all this he is of course directed by his rider the *mahout*, who uses certain words which the elephant has been accustomed to hear; and signs, the meaning of which he knows perfectly. A push of the foot behind the right or left ear makes him answer the driver's wish as a boat answers the rudder, and a nudge behind the neck means "Straight ahead."

"A highly trained elephant, however, will work among timber by verbal directions as intelligently almost as a collie will among sheep. The finest and best-trained animals are reserved for employment in the saw-mills, where they work amongst the machinery with sagacity and precision. Strangers have sometimes been so much impressed with their admirable qualities in this respect that they have carried away slightly exaggerated impressions on the subject. One case I remember in which a spectator was so profoundly overcome by the careful manner in which he saw the elephant

laying planks and slabs on the travelling benches to be cut, that he gravely reported the circumstance in an Indian newspaper, remarking that the animal shut one eye when it looked along the bench to make sure the timber was laid on for the saw accurately!

"Some male elephants have no tusks. These are called *hmes* by the Burmese. The most powerful animal I ever had was one of them. He was very tall, and in strength a perfect Samson among elephants. An incident in his history is worth relating here, as I am on the subject. In the month of January male elephants sometimes give trouble. Samson had fallen into a capricious mood, under the influence of a little siren belonging to the herd, and in a fit of jealousy he frightened all the others so thoroughly one night that they broke their fetters and made a bolt of it out of the timber-yard, with Samson in pursuit. One unfortunate member who was on the stock-list at the time and had an impediment in his walk, was bowled over and trampled on several times, and was never fit for anything but the hospital afterwards. The others took to the jungle, and it cost some money to recover them. Samson remained in possession of the timber-yard for three whole days, no living thing daring to venture near him.

"I have watched a fowl that had thoughtlessly gone to scrape for its morning meal on the accustomed spot in the rear of the elephant-shed, run for its bare life, with Samson after it at full speed, trunk and tail extended! Crowds of people used to collect daily, most of them at a highly respectful distance however, to witness the giant keeping the world at bay. Sometimes an adventurous native, out of pure mischief would approach within thirty yards or so of him spear in hand, when Samson would thump his trunk upon the ground and rush at the intruder, who soon disappeared under the nearest verandah. The poor animal was helpless against such tactics. They were to him what the deprivation of sight was to his prototype; but the desire for revenge was there still, and he tried his strength upon the posts of the building, attempting to push them down. When he had failed in this, he deliberately set about unroofing it with his trunk; whereupon the tormentor pricked his legs from underneath the house with his spear, and made him desist. After carrying on this game till he got tired, he walked off with his companion one night to the jungle, and selected a spot for his future residence close to a mud-pool.

"For some days he made raids upon the adjoining gardens, eating up the fruit-trees without compunction; and in revenge for some opposition he met with from a market-gardener who did not appreciate his new neighbour's high-handed way of doing things, levelled his hut to the ground. Things were beginning to get serious. Claims for damages became unpleasantly frequent, and it was absolutely necessary to put a stop to his depredations. Accordingly, I sent out a deputation of elephants to wait upon him, with picked men as drivers and attendants, for the purpose of bringing him to reason. There were ten elephants altogether, the senior member being a very patriarchal-looking animal with an immense pair of tusks—the one, in fact, who was always employed to settle difficulties among the juniors; and in this capacity he had been uniformly successful. When

the deputation arrived at the spot, Samson was enjoying his morning bath in the mud, and they surrounded him. The patriarch, with the chief *mahout* driving, and another good man and true behind him, for the purpose of supplying any lack of moral courage that might manifest itself under trying circumstances, was taken nearest to the renegade. His sweetheart was quietly browsing among the bamboos close by. The moment Samson realised the situation, he made a rush from the bath at the patriarch, who forgetting his wonted dignity of manner, turned tail and bolted. The hook and the spear with which the drivers were armed alike failed to restore courage to the leader. On he went, tearing through the jungle, the branches of trees and thorny creepers making sad havoc with the persons of the men on his back. His bad example demoralised the whole force; they fled for their lives every one of them. At last it came to be a race between Samson and the patriarch, the other elephants having made lateral tracks for themselves and got clear of danger. When it came to close quarters between the two, the *mahout* thinking discretion the better part of valour, laid hold of the branch of a tree as he passed and held on, leaving the other man to his fate. In a very short time he too was unseated, but in an involuntary manner; the elephant shot under the branch of a tree which did not afford space for the man to pass under as well, and he was swept to the ground. He was able, however, to elude the pursuer, who was so eager to get at the four-footed fugitive that he took no notice of the fallen rider as he crawled along into the thick jungle.

Fortunately no life was lost in this most exciting adventure. Even the patriarch got off scot-free. When tired of the pursuit, Samson returned to his rural retreat. The deputation got home in the evening, more frightened than hurt. I administered chlorodyne with much success to those whose bruises and lacerations bespoke a sleepless night; and it has since been regarded as a specific for patients suffering from cutaneous diseases and nervous excitement.

But I have not done with Samson yet. He was a valuable elephant, and I was most anxious to recover him. I offered a reward of two hundred rupees (twenty pounds) to any one who would bring him in; and a few days afterwards he came marching into the timber-yard as gentle as a lamb, with a young lad astride on his neck. This youth was the son of the man from whom I had purchased him, and the boy had been familiar with the animal from his childhood. Hearing of the reward that was offered for the apprehension of his old pet, he set off in quest of him. When he found him, he made use of the terms with which Samson had formerly been familiar. There was no longer any difficulty. The youth took him by the ear, told him to give him a leg up—the usual way for *mahouts* to mount their steeds—and immediately Samson was himself again. Next day he was on duty, looking as if nothing had happened, and his little friend was the possessor of a reward which to him was a small fortune. Such is the affinity between God's creatures which the law of kindness establishes. The little fellow had really more power in the tones of his voice over the huge animal than a phalanx of its own species under the direction of a score of men!

There are elephants that have naturally one tusk only. These are called *tays* by the natives here. When the single tusk happens to be on the right side of the head, literally as well as metaphorically, and the animal otherwise is large and well proportioned, he is greatly prized by the native princes of India. They seem to regard him with veneration, as the Burmese do the so-called white elephant. There is one of these *tays* at the depot at present. He is the largest and most powerful animal in the government herd; but age is telling upon him, and now he is chiefly occupied in doing "the heavy-father" amongst the youngsters. When they have tried their best and given up in despair some log which none of them can drag, the *tay* is brought to the front, his chain is fastened to it, and as he walks off, apparently without inconvenience to himself, be it ever so heavy, his eye really seems to have "Bless you, my children!" &c. in it. I have watched him often, and I think my interpretation of his feelings is pretty nearly correct. I was told by the superintendent of the depot that native princes had sent messengers from India to try and purchase this elephant for state purposes, offering as much as five thousand rupees for him; but he has a value where he is which does not consist in a superstitious veneration for his single tusk, but in the virtue which lies in a friend in need.

TO A LITTLE CHILD,

Who, soon after going to his first school, wrote home to his mother: "I am afraid I am spoiling your photograph by dropping my tears on it. I take it to bed with me every night!"

Couchen within thy little nest,
Now the lessons all are done,
Clasp her Picture to thy breast,
Fondly clasp thy dearest one.

Freely let the tear-drops flow,
Tears of love, like showers of Spring;
In thy heart Love's flowers shall grow,
And shall sweetest comfort bring.

Fear not, if those features fade,
If thy tears their form shall dim;
Prayers ascend, while thou art laid
Murmuring soft thy Evening Hymn.

Living lips, no artist made,
Nor the sun-ray's magic might,
In thy Mother's home have prayed
To thy God for thee to-night.

Angels fly from her to thee;
Thou and her good Angels tend;
So your Father bids, and He
Will your dear ones all defend.

Press her Picture to thy heart;
Smile upon it through thy tears;
Never let that love depart
Through the changing, coming years.

Sacred is the Mother's love,
Dear to God the loving son;
Thou shalt be with her above,
When the work of life is done.

St BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL,
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T. S. J.

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OTTOMAN GIPSIES.

INDEPENDENT and savage, unrecognised by the people in whose midst he lives, and whose society and civilisation he has ever learnt to shun, the Ottoman gipsy—of whom there are some two hundred thousand souls—has neither political nor literary history of his own, and is at once the most brutal and degraded of all the wandering races. Religious because it suits his convenience to be so, submissive to law because he fears punishment, he leads a wild and wretched life, scarcely earning by his industry the wherewithal to satisfy even the most frugal demands of nature. Yet secure in his tent he defies the world, and hates with an undying enmity all strangers to his race. Can it then be wondered at that neither Christian nor Mussulman bears any great love for his unsovereign neighbour, nor cares to enter into commercial relationship with him? Even those gipsies who have abandoned tents for fixed dwellings have but little ameliorated their condition, and are no less heartily despised on that account. Their superficial religion, their inclination to theft, their skill in deception, and their brutal debaucheries, cause them to be distrusted wherever they may chance to settle, and exclude them for ever from participation in the benefits of a more civilised state of society.

To deal firstly with the veritable wandering gipsy, who knows no settled home, whose tents dot the sunny landscapes of European Turkey, Roumania, and Asia Minor, who is here one day and there the next, the question arises, whither goeth he and whence cometh he? We shall see.

About the middle of April, sooner or later according to the season, he quits his winter's residence, or *gypsy* as he terms it, and begins to roam the surrounding country. Some of his kind descend from the north of the Balkans and pass into Asia Minor; others mount where their brethren descended, only to return about the commencement of October; whilst some—and these, in our humble opinion, by far the most sensible—confine themselves, in their migrations,

to one single province, where they know the wants of all and are known by all.

When cold and frost cut short their wanderings, and warn them to beat a retreat, they unfailingly return to their old quarters, where in the vicinity of some open spring they dream away the wintry hours, little molested by their Turkish neighbours. Sometimes they enliven the monotony of this season by a clandestine hunt, but it is more from a desire to rob with impunity than from any wish to nourish themselves on the game they thus slay.

With black shaggy hair, bronzed weather-beaten face, and dark brilliant eyes, the stalwart Mussulman gipsy is by far the best type of his race. He detests and distrusts all but the dwellers in tents. Although familiarised with village life, and often half frozen under his frail covering, he prefers to die beneath his well-patched canvas, to living restricted by the narrow walls and low ceiling of a chamber. Nothing ever seems to rouse the stolid indifference of one of his race. He lives and dies as a beast. The habits of his civilised neighbours, the garments of their women, the cleanliness of their homes and children, and their usually happy appearance, all have no effect whatever upon him. At night-time he retires to his tent to rest, and everything he has seen is forgotten or looked upon as an idle dream; and he works mechanically on from day to day, without the slightest desire to enter into the joyous stream of life with which he finds himself surrounded.

Some few of his kind are so poor as to be unable to purchase even a tent, and these are compelled to dwell as they best may in hollow tree-trunks or chasms in the rocks; whilst others, chiefly those of Bosnia, have wooden bark-covered cabins, which they remove from place to place, on unwieldy wagons, drawn by from ten to a dozen oxen at a time. Some work in iron, some are basket and sieve makers. They are often oppressed, and seldom if ever find defenders. Books and newspapers are quite unknown to them, and the commonest of domestic utensils find no place in their tiny tents.

About their origin they know little, though the prophet Job, they say, taught their ancestors the trade they now follow; and they have some slight suspicion that they formerly came from Persia to the country they at present occupy.

The Turks call them *Tchinganés*; whilst the term they know one another by is *Rom*, the title which binds the whole of the widely scattered nomad tribes together. Their language itself is styled *Romany*.

There is not the slightest allusion to a deity in any of their most ancient songs and legends, and they have no religious observances peculiar to themselves alone. They have but one festival, during which for three whole days they abandon themselves to feasting and merriment. The fatted lamb is slain by those who can afford it, the tent decorated with flowers, and passers-by freely invited to join their repast; all litigations and legal processes are temporarily adjourned, and their annual tax is then paid to the Turkish government. One branch of their race, the *Zapari*, are the most ferocious of their kind. They are to be found at the village fêtes and large fairs, whither they go to earn a few coins by the display of their dancing bears or performing monkeys. Some few of them are blacksmiths in winter. The *Zapari* are all Mussulmans; and from their ranks the Sublime Porte finds its supply of hangmen. They form quite a distinct class of themselves, being held in abhorrence even by their savage brethren. Outcasts of outcasts, they stop short of no crime, and are fitting companions for the much-talked-of *Bashi-Bazouks* or wild marauders of the late disastrous war.

But now to turn to the renegade or housed gipsy. Still retaining the inherent desire for liberty so common to his race, he avails himself of his dwelling as a shelter only by night, traversing the streets by day, tricked out in dirty gaudy clothing, or seated with wife and family just without the threshold of his hut, there frittering the precious hours away. His children, if sent to school at all, are only despatched there to be out of the way, and his home is as devoid of furniture and well-nigh as comfortless as the ragged tent of his more Esau-like brother. Little by little he forgets his old language, but not his vicious habits, and very often ends by intermarrying with some poor Greek family whose members are as lazy and apathetic as himself.

Their language—descended from the old Sanscrit—has besides giving the only real clue to their origin, also shed some rays over the dark period between the first emigration of the gipsies from India and their appearance in Europe. Originally the distinct mode of speech of a single and special border tribe of Northern India, it has, during the many wanderings of the race, appropriated words from nearly every country through which they passed; while on the other hand it lost many of its own words, and still more of its own inherent power and elegance; and much also

of its resemblance to the mother tongue. These adopted foreign words, their relative number, and their more or less corrupted state, point plainly to the gipsies having passed from India first into Persia, to their having remained there a considerable time, and to their having wended their way to some Greek country, perhaps Asia Minor, and to their descent thence into their present European homes.

It is worthy of further remark, as proof of their Indian origin, that the speech of the English gipsies has been found on comparison most marvellously akin to that of the natives of Bombay, though some of their words have, strangely enough, entirely changed the meaning they at first possessed.

The speech of the *Tchinganés* is rude, sharp, strongly accented, and somewhat difficult to comprehend. Properly spoken it is harmonious enough, though rendered hoarse and almost distasteful by the wild tribes who employ it. 'We speak,' say they themselves, 'as the birds sing, but we sing as the lions roar!' With them *papa* signifies an apple, *cat* scissors, *rat* night, *Devel* God, whilst *dad* seems to be the only word exactly synonymous with any in our own language.

Heroic in suffering, the true Ottoman gipsy never sheds a tear. On his legs to the last, he only betakes himself to his couch when death is too surely nigh, and departs without a murmur from the life that has been so full of unhappiness and misery to him. Buried apart from the rest of humanity, and unwept even by his own, his low moral nature is apt to be forgotten in his sad end though the unsuccessful efforts of more than one philanthropical European Society testify to the fact, that whatever else you may do with the Ottoman gipsy, you will never succeed in even partially civilising him.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XX.—AS GOVERNESS.

THE establishment at High Tor was by no means on so sumptuous a scale as that which the much larger revenues of Sir Sykes Denzil maintained at Carbery Chase. Indeed, while for a baronet Sir Sykes was rich, for an earl Lord Wolverhampton was almost poor. There are poorer earls than he, no doubt, dwelling in cheap watering-places or in outlying London squares, and exhibiting their pearl-studded coronets on no more pretentious equipage than a brougham. But for a man of his degree, and a *De Vere* wital, the Earl was not wealthy. It was much to his credit that he was popular in spite of the comparative slenderness of his annual rent-roll, since a poor lord, like an impoverished government, is apt to be regarded with a sort of unreasoning contempt by those who are very likely worse off, but in a less conspicuous station.

To be rich is, after all, a very uncertain distinction; that which is opulence to the Squire implying mere substantial comfort when it belongs to Sir

John, and but a moderate income when it meet the calls which charity, duty, and custom on 'my lord's' bank balance. Are there not of princely rank who declare that they are of pocket-money, of actual jingling sovereign rustling notes, by the prudent administration of their vast nominal fortunes? And have we heard of mighty financiers who feel a pang at any encroachment on the colossal capital on which is reared the fabric of a world-wide credit?

Lord Wolborough had been known to more than once among his intimate friends, to a step in the peerage would to him prove a ruin; and that to keep his head above water difficult as an Earl, would be impossible were that honest head overweighed by the strawberry-leaved coronet of a Marquis. Such expensive promotion was, however, unlikely, for High Tor not sent forth no legislators to the more stirring of the Houses of Parliament. Some two years before, Lord Harrogate had been returned for a west-country borough, and had earned some praise and much good-will during the brief tenure of his seat. But the session came to a close, and with it the corporate life of the moribund House of Commons; and the Earl could not bring himself again to face the costly struggle of a contested election, even on behalf of a son so promising as his heir.

Thus the fine old house of High Tor, though lacking no adjuncts or appliances that should appertain to the mansion of a plain country gentleman who happened to have a handle to his name (such was the Earl's favourite way of describing himself among those who knew him well, though it may be doubted whether any patrician in Europe cherished in secret a stronger sentiment of family pride), was not kept up with quite so ostentatious a lavishness as the neighbouring dwelling of Carbery, the red gables of which glancing in the western sun, never met Lord Wolverhampton's eyes without suggesting the remembrance that it had been built and, till recently, owned by a De Vere.

There was space enough and to spare in the picturesque old mansion; and the chamber which had been assigned to Ekeliel Gray, and which had been formerly tenanted by that Miss Grainger whose desertion of her post as governess to try the experiment of wedded life we have heard the Countess deplore, and which was next to the great rambling school-room, commanded a noble prospect over hill and dale, over wood and water. From the ivy-framed windows, in clear weather, Dartmoor might be seen for miles and leagues, rolling away in giant waves of purple heather and gray and green; while here and there rose up delicately the naked crags, known locally as Tors, frowning like natural fortresses on the invader of the wilderness.

Nearer, the two parks were visible, with all their wealth of huge old trees and matchless turf, browsed by hereditary deer, that couched contentedly amid the tall fern that had screened the antlered herds for centuries past, and the red roof and gleaming vanes of stately Carbery, and the peaceful waters of its ornamental lake, in which

"Gentress; and I am almost as certain
father never heard of them either;
strongly recommended, a clergyman
friend is all I have learned con-
fidence in such a performer as
she is to hear too.
Lady Clara shook her head, and
said, she said, "I would rather
be coaxed into it possibly it was
stranger. She was keeping them
discussed with kept them
and Maud moved the move-
ment by which he

wired impulsive child, came swiftly down-stairs to the room where her mother and sisters were sitting. 'Pray, come, Maud!' she said breathlessly; 'Gladys, you come too; and you, mamma. It's worth while, indeed it is, only to listen for a moment!'

'What is to be listened to?' asked the Countess, amused at the eager manner of her youngest child.

'Miss Gray's singing, her wonderful, wonderful singing!' returned the child impetuously. 'I heard it by accident as I passed the door of the school-room, where she is all alone at the piano; and I could hardly tear myself away that I might tell you not to lose the treat.'

The Countess laughed good-humouredly. 'All Alice's geese are swans,' she said; 'and I am too old to climb so many stairs on the strength of this young lady's recommendation. You are young, Maud, yourself, and I see you cannot resist the temptation; nor you either. Gladys.'

And indeed the two elder of the Ladies Do Vere had allowed themselves to be convinced, or at least rendered compliant, by the pleading eyes and the energetic 'Do come, please,' of their child-sister. It was some little time before they returned.

"Mamma, Alice was right; and you have lost a treat worth a longer pilgrimage than that, said frank Lady Glady, coming down, with Alice, radiant with delight, skipping at her side. 'Th Miss Gray (Maud, who is really getting fond of her, addresses her as "Ethel" already) has a voice that might make her fortune if she were less timid, and so sweet and liquid that one might fancy it the carol of a bird. Such a touch too on the keys! That jangling wheezy old school-room piano, on which excellent Miss Grainger used to pound so distressingly, gives out real music beneath those fingers of hers, and becomes full-toned and mellow. What a shame to throw away talent such as that upon the A B C work of teaching; urchins the rudiments of knowledge!"

'I never heard of these high musical attainments of Miss Gray's, I am sure,' said the puzzled

About their origin they know little, thoutat your prophet Job, they say, taught their an^r. She was trade they now follow; and they haⁿ an old college suspicion that they formerly cam^r somewhere, and the country they at present ocⁿ describe, I should

The Turks call them *T* term they know one an^r her head. 'I am not which binds the w^t-ther so shy a song-bird can nomad tribes tog^r, arbling before an audience of styled Roman^xen Alice began to clap her hands

There is and I broke in upon her. She had no any of the said, that her singing could be heard they y of us in that out-of-the-way corner of so the ge a house, and seemed to think she had taken a great liberty and infringed rules of social decorum. And it was all that even Maud, whom she likes, could do to persuade her to sing again, only a little bit of a ballad; but it all but brought tears into my eyes, hackneyed girl of the world as I am, you know.'

In explanation of which last speech, it may be mentioned that Lady Gladys, the beauty of the family, had gone through two London seasons under the chaperonage of her mother's sister, the Marchioness of Plinlimmon, and that it was supposed that if she had remained unmarried still, it was not for want of offers matrimonial.

'I was thinking, mamma,' said Lady Maud, who had lingered longer with Ethel than her sister had done, 'that you could scarcely do better than to engage Miss Gray, if it suits her, as a governess for Alice, instead of writing to every point of the compass in hopes that some friend will recommend some treasure. It's not only that Ethel Gray is really too good for the routine of plodding tuition in a village school, but that she knows everything, or nearly everything, that Miss Grainger knew, and French and German quite as well as it is possible to acquire them in England. Gladys has told you, I am sure, what a musician she is. I do not know how you could do better.'

The Countess too did not know how she could do better than to engage such a successor to the oft-quoted Miss Grainger, provided she possessed the accomplishments with which she was credited, and were willing—which Lady Wolverhampton could scarcely doubt—to exchange her rustic pupils for the post of governess at High Tor House. And as, on inquiry, it seemed that Ethel's acquirements had not been overrated, and that her magnificent voice and musical proficiency fully merited the encomiums of the girls, while Alice was a vehement partisan of the governess-elect, the Countess was ready to propose the formal installation of Ethel in that capacity, subject to 'my lord's' approval, when he should return from some magisterial business at Pebworth.

It was, however, necessary, in the Countess's opinion, to ask a question or two on other matters than that of competence to teach. The office of mistress of the village school was one thing; that of governess to an Earl's youngest daughter was another. It would be satisfactory, the Countess thought, to know a little more of Miss Gray's birth, parentage, and antecedents than any of the De Vere family did as yet know. Ethel's simple frankness saved Lady Wolverhampton—who did not like to put direct questions, and was eminently unfit for the delicate operation of extracting by

subtle talk and veiled inquiry what she wished to learn—a great deal of trouble.

'My father is in Australia,' she said, raising her clear eyes to meet those of the Countess. 'He is, I believe, a merchant there; but even *that* I do not know with any certainty, though he has been living there for many years, and I have always been told that I was born in the colony. I came with him to England, I know, when I was a little child, and he returned there; and I have not seen him since then, and cannot remember him at all.'

Ethel's story was a brief one. She had little to relate, save of her early youth, spent at Sandston, a minor bathing-place on the Norfolk coast, where Mr Gray, a widower, who had paid but a short visit to his native country, had left his only child under the care of an excellent woman, one Mrs Linklater, a widow and mistress of a lodging-house. Ethel's eyes grew dim as she spoke of good motherly Mrs Linklater, at whose death, three years before, she had been received into the house of the clergyman, who had been a college friend of the Earl, and to whose wife she had been a sort of companion.

'Dear Mrs Keating,' said Ethel simply, 'quite, I am afraid, spoiled me. For years and years, when Mrs Linklater was alive, I spent much of my time at the vicarage; and Mrs Keating, who was herself very accomplished, taught me almost all the little that I know. She was fond of music, and understood it as few understand it, and it is through her kindness that I learned to sing and play. She had no children living except the three sons who were making their way in the world; and I believe that she thought I was like a little daughter she had lost, and whose name, like mine, was Ethel, and so'—

'And so she took you to live with her, when this worthy Mrs—yes, Linklater died,' said the Countess encouragingly. 'But how came you to leave her?'

Ethel's explanation of that was clear enough. Mrs Keating's health, always frail, had given way, and she had been ordered to a warmer climate. Dr Keating, who had accompanied his wife to Mentone and Bellaggio, had a curate to pay and heavy expenses to meet. It was necessary that Ethel should get her own living; and it was at her own suggestion that Dr Keating had sought for her that appointment as mistress of a village school which his acquaintance with the Earl had enabled him to obtain for her at High Tor.

'But your father?' said the Countess, full of sympathy, for she liked the girl better and better for all that she saw or heard of her. Ethel smiled somewhat sadly. Mr Gray, it appeared, seldom wrote, and then very curtly, from Australia. For nearly two years the customary remittance, sufficient to defray the cost of his daughter's maintenance, had not reached Sandston. That he would one day come back to England, Ethel hoped. He had been, she feared, of late less prosperous in his affairs than was formerly the case. Dr Keating held the address in Sydney to which letters to the widower had been hitherto addressed.

The matter was settled; the proposal that Ethel should become governess to Lady Alice, and as such should be permanently domiciled at High Tor, was graciously made and gratefully accepted.

'I shall have to look out for another school-mistress, it seems,' said the good-natured old Earl;

'but never mind that. Alice is pleased, and Mand is pleased; and as Miss Gray seems to like it too, I think we may say that some good came of our luckless fire, after all.'

SOME PHYSIOLOGICAL ERRORS.

ONE of the notable examples of popular delusions regarding bodily structure and functions, is exemplified by the belief that the third finger was selected as the bearer of the wedding-ring because a particular nerve placed this member in direct communication with the heart. Over and over again has this belief been expressed, and in the belief is found an apparently satisfactory reason why the third finger is thus honoured. The slightest acquaintance with physiological science shews that the supposition referred to has not even a germ of probability to shew on its behalf. The ring-finger is supplied with nerves according to the rule of nervous supply in the body generally, and, it need hardly be said, without the slightest reference to the heart; the nerves of which in turn are supplied from an independent source and one quite dissociated from that which supplies the nerves of the hand.

Equally curious and erroneous beliefs intrude themselves into the domain of medicine and surgery. Thus for instance it is a matter of ordinary belief that a cut in the space which separates the thumb from the forefinger is of necessity a most dangerous injury. The popular notion regarding this region is that an injury inflicted thereon is singularly liable to be followed by tetanus or lock-jaw. There exist not the slightest grounds for this supposition. Lock-jaw it is true might follow an injury to this part of the hand, as it might supervene after a wound of any of the fingers. But physiology and medicine alike emphatically dispel the idea that any peculiarity of structure which might predispose to the affection just named, exists *chiefly* in the region of the thumb. It may be that the difficulty experienced in securing the healing of wounds in this portion of the hand—owing to the amount of loose tissue and to the free movements of the part which it is almost impossible to prevent—might favour or predispose to an attack of tetanus. But as the same remark may be made of many other portions of the body, it follows that the thumb-region possesses no peculiarity whatever in this respect over any other part of the frame.

One of the points which has been most hotly contested in technical as well as in popular physiology is the use and functions of the *spleen*. This organ, as most readers are aware, is a gland, of somewhat oval shape, lying close to the left side or extremity of the stomach. It is one of the so-called 'ductless' glands of the body—that is, it possesses no duct or outlet, as do the liver, sweetbread, and other glands concerned with the formation of special fluids used in digestion and other functions. In olden times philosophers puzzled themselves over this mysterious organ;

nor was its nature rendered any clearer by the discovery of the fact that it may be removed from the bodies of the higher animals without causing any great or subsequent inconvenience, and without affecting in any perceptible degree the health of the subject operated upon. One classical authority went so far as to allege that he could find no use whatever for the organ; whilst another maintained that possibly it was intended to serve as a kind of packing for the other organs around it, and that it kept them from getting out of their places in the movements of the body. The idea, however, which obtained most credence was that which regarded the spleen as the fountain and origin of all the vile 'humours' which rankled the blood and soured the disposition of man. We can still trace in the metaphorical expressions of our literature this ancient belief; so that what at first were regarded as literal and true ideas of the spleen and its use, have come in modern days to do duty simply as metaphors.

Modern science, in dispelling those antiquated notions, has now assigned to the spleen a very important part in our internal mechanism. The part it plays may be thus described. The blood, as every one who has looked at a thin film of that substance through a microscope will know, is in reality a fluid as clear as water, and derives its colour from the immense number of little red bodies the 'corpuscles,' which float in it. These red corpuscles of human blood do not attain a greater size than the $\frac{1}{2000}$ th part of an inch—that is, three thousand five hundred of these little bodies placed in a line would make up an inch in length. In addition to the red bodies, there exist in the blood a much smaller number of 'white corpuscles,' each containing a little central particle which the red ones want. From the results of the most recent researches it would appear that the red corpuscles are produced by the partial destruction of the white ones; and that the little central particles of the white globules, when coloured, appear before us as the red corpuscles of the blood. Now the spleen is to be regarded as the great manufactory or *depository* in which the red corpuscles are thus produced from the white ones, and in which also many of the white corpuscles are themselves developed. And it would also appear highly probable, that when the red globules of the blood have served their turn in the economy of the body they are broken down in the spleen; their material being doubtless used for some wise purpose in the maintenance of our complicated frame.

A very common idea, but one founded on no certain or feasible grounds, is that which maintains that our bodies undergo a complete change and renewal of all their parts every seven years. The 'mystical' nature of the number seven, has had an unquestionable effect in originating this opinion; and although the age of fourteen and again that of twenty-one may be regarded as marking the attainment of youth and manhood

or womanhood respectively, yet physiology gives no countenance to the popular opinion that of necessity these periods are those of sweeping bodily change. On the contrary, it might be shewn that the periods at which full growth of body is attained vary with climate, race, and constitution—that is, with the personal nature, and with the physical surroundings of individuals, communities, and nations. The true state of matters as disclosed by physiology, leads us to contemplate actions and changes which are of infinitely more wondrous kind than those involved in the idea of septennial change. For if there is one axiom which physiology maintains more constantly than another, it is that which teaches that constant and *never-ceasing* change is the lot of life from its beginning to its end.

No part of the body of a living being is free from these changes of substance, through which indeed every act of life is carried on. Every movement of a muscle—the winking of an eyelid or the lifting of a finger—implies waste of the organs and parts which move. The thinking of a thought implies wear and tear of the organ which thinks—the brain itself. Were it possible to spend existence even in a perfectly still and rigid condition, there are still actions to be performed which are necessary for the maintenance of life, and which necessitate continual waste and wear of the tissues. Thus the beating of the heart, the movements of our chest in breathing, and the very act of receiving and digesting food—actions which are in themselves concerned with the repair of the frame—can only be performed through the intervention of processes of work, and waste of body. So that a living being is to be regarded as passing its existence in a constant state of change. Its particles are being continually wasted, and as incessantly renewed; and although the growth of our bodies may be said to culminate at various periods of our life, yet it is anything but correct to say that there are marked epochs of change in human existence. The truth is that change and alteration are our continual heritage; and it is strange indeed to think that not an organ or part of our bodies exists which has not repeatedly in its history been insensibly and gradually, but none the less perfectly, renewed in all its parts. Our particles and substance are being dissipated in very many ways and fashions. Chemically and physically, we are in a state of continual break-down; whilst on the other hand, it may be shewn that the forces of life are enlisted powerfully on the side of renewal and repair.

In connection with the exercise of our senses there are not a few points on which popular ideas stand in need of correction. When we speak of 'seeing' or 'hearing,' the exercise of these or any other of our senses indeed, is usually referred to the organ concerned—eye, ear, nose, or tongue, as the case may be. A little consideration, however, will shew us that we make a very grievous mistake in referring the act of sensation or perception to the organ itself. Let us consider for a moment what happens when we acquire ideas regarding the form of an object through the sense of touch. We may in the first place 'will' to touch the object in question; the act of 'volition' as it is termed, originating in the brain, being transformed into nerve-force, and being further directed along the

particular nerves which supply the muscles of one finger or along those which supply all the fingers. The muscles are thus stimulated to action, and through their agency the fingers are brought into contact with the desired object. Leaving the sense of sight out of consideration for a moment, we know that we can through the sense of touch gain ideas regarding the form, size, hardness, and other qualities of the object. Our nervous system is thus bringing us into relation with the outer world and specially with that portion of it represented by the object we have touched. But how have we gained our knowledge? The reply to this question leads us at once to perceive that the tips of the fingers do not represent the seat of knowledge. And a further consideration makes it equally clear that the brain must be credited not only with the task of perceiving, but also with that of appreciating what has been perceived. Hence we are forced to conclude that just as the first nervous impulse shot through the nerves to the fingers, so a second impulse has passed from the fingers to the brain. Our sense of touch has given origin to a subtle force which has passed upwards to the brain, and has there become transformed, through a mechanism—of the working of which we know as yet absolutely nothing—into perception and thought. Similarly with the work of the eye, of the ear, and of other senses.

When we talk of seeing or hearing, we are in reality speaking of the act of the brain, not of the eye or ear, which are merely the 'gateways' through which the brain obtains its knowledge. And that the brain is the true seat of the senses, may be proved to us from the side of pathology—the science which makes us acquainted with the causes and nature of disease. Cases are well known in which injury of the brain as the seat of sense has given origin to depraved sensations. Post-mortem examinations of persons who were continually conscious of a disagreeable odour have proved that these persons had laboured under brain-disease; whilst one case is on record in which, after a fall from a horse, and for several years before his death, a person believed that he smelt a bad odour. So also the sense of sight may be altered from internal causes, and on this ground may be explained the real nature of many cases of so-called ghost-seeing and spectral illusions. One well-known case, in illustration of this latter point, was that of Nicolai, a Berlin bookseller, who, neglecting to be bled in accordance with his usual custom, began to see strange persons in his room, and faithfully described the appearance of the figures. The figures disappeared when he had been bled once more. Thus in all such cases we must believe that those parts of the eye or ear which would have been concerned in seeing the supposititious objects or hearing the supposititious sounds—had either existed—were irritated from the brain and produced the delusive sensations. Thus the common phrase that 'seeing is believing' is in one sense literally true; for the act of sight apparently exercised in the person who suffers from optical illusions is in reality performed by the brain and is thus an act of belief, even if it be one of unconscious kind. The entire subject of physiological errors teems with valuable applications, but with none more practical or worthy of remark than that which would insist

on the advantages, in the ruling wisely of our lives, to be derived from even an elementary acquaintance—such as should be included in the curriculum of every school—with the science of life.

MR ASLATT'S WARD.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

I DID NOT then know what I afterwards learned, the full extent of her obligations to Mr Aslatt, nor the sentiments of love which that gentleman came to entertain for his beautiful ward. A pretty child of six, singing in the streets of a foreign city, she had first attracted his notice; and her sad lot had so touched his heart, that he could not rest till he had rescued her from it. The itinerant musicians in whose company he found her spoke of her as an orphan, the child of a former comrade, and made no objection when Mr Aslatt proposed to adopt her and provide for her future. He was a lonely man, with no near relatives to resent this action on his part; and the child became the delight of his life and the idol of his heart. He was but a young man when he took the little orphan under his protection, and his friends thought it an alarming proof of the eccentricity which had already marked him. But a bitter disappointment had blighted his life, and made it impossible, he then thought, for him ever to have a happy married life, such as he had once anticipated. He determined to spend his wealth in giving brightness to the existence of the little fairy-like creature, who seemed made to live in the sunshine; and in the effort to promote little Rose's happiness he found his own. When it was that his paternal fondness for her passed into a warmer more passionate emotion, and he experienced a longing to bind her to himself by the closest of all ties, I could not know; but that such was the nature of his regard for her when I went to reside at his house, was beyond doubt.

And it was equally plain that Rose entertained for him a very different feeling. She looked upon him as her dear guardian and friend, one who had been as a father to her; but I do not think the possibility of any other relationship had ever crossed her mind. Indeed it was pretty evident to me that another was frequently in her thoughts to the exclusion of Mr Aslatt, who was so untiring in his efforts to win her love. I was grieved to see how often she wounded him by her thoughtless wilful conduct; and the patience with which he bore with her capricious moods, fully enlisted my sympathies on his behalf. If any word of mine could have influenced my wayward charge to value more highly her true-hearted friend, it would have been spoken; but from what I knew of her, I judged that I should better serve Mr Aslatt's cause by silence than by speech.

On the day following that of our excursion to Ashdene, Rose took me for a drive in her little shell-shaped chaise, drawn by two pretty Shetland ponies. We drove through narrow country lanes with hedges gay with wild-flowers, and across a breezy common covered with golden furze-bushes, returning by a road which led us through the village.

'This is the school-house,' said Rose as we

approached a rather imposing-looking structure in red brick; and without another word she pulled up her ponies and alighted.

I followed her into the large school-room, which at that hour was deserted. Mr Hammond, however, had heard our entrance, and almost immediately came in from an inner room. The bright flush which tinged Rose's cheek as he appeared, and the somewhat conscious manner in which she greeted him, seemed to confirm my previous surmises. He was certainly a very handsome man; and his manner and bearing were in striking contrast to his position. I could not wonder that a girl like Rose should be fascinated by his appearance and address, even while, in spite of his efforts to please me, the feeling of distrust with which I had at first regarded him, deepened. From what I observed during that interview, I felt pretty certain that some private understanding already existed between him and Rose. I dared not question my wilful charge, knowing well how her proud spirit would resent any interference from me. Yet I longed to do something to prevent this man from obtaining a fatal influence over her heart. But I could only wait and watch for what time might reveal, resolved meanwhile to accompany Rose whenever she paid a visit to the school-house. I saw that this precaution of mine afforded satisfaction to Mr Aslatt.

The summer weeks passed away swiftly and pleasantly with me. But the signs of secret sorrow became more plainly visible on Mr Aslatt's countenance, and I felt sure he was tortured with anxiety on account of Rose's intimacy with the schoolmaster. I sometimes wondered that he did not dismiss Mr Hammond from his post, but I suppose he dreaded Rose's reproaching him with injustice; for in truth the schoolmaster appeared most exemplary in the discharge of his duties, and no reasonable ground of complaint could be found. I became anxious also, as I saw every week fresh proofs of Rose's attachment to Mr Hammond. At last a day arrived when my suspicions as to the existence of a secret understanding between the two were confirmed in a most unexpected manner. It was a warm September evening. Rose, complaining of a headache, had retired early to rest, and I was about to follow her example, when looking from my window at the calm beauty of the garden as it lay in the clear light of the moon, I was tempted to take a stroll. Wrapping a shawl about me, I went down the steps leading into the garden, and slowly walked down the green alley bordered by tall laurel bushes. It was almost as light as day until I reached the end of the walk, where some large trees obscured the moonbeams. As I passed into their shadow I thought of the warning Rose had given me on the night of my arrival. I smiled at the remembrance; and in order to prove to myself that I had no fear of supernatural encounter, I turned into the path which led towards that part of the house said to be haunted. Here the gloom deepened, for the shrubs and trees in this portion of the garden had been neglected, and suffered to grow at will, until they intertwined their branches overhead, forming a leafy covering.

'How frightened Rose would be, if she were here,' I thought; but the next moment I became conscious that my own bravery was not worth

much. A sudden rustling amongst the leaves close at hand startled me, and involuntarily I turned to go back. But ashamed of my cowardice, I almost immediately turned round again, and peering through the bushes in the direction from which the sound had come, tried to discover its cause. 'It was merely some dog or cat straying amongst the shrubs,' I said to myself, trying to shake off the fear which had taken possession of me. But again I heard the sound more distinctly than before, and it seemed to me that some one must be walking along the path on the other side of the shrubbery. But I could see nothing, and my heart began to beat violently in dread of I knew not what. A cloud had passed over the moon, and the wind was rising and making a mournful 'sough' amongst the trees, which was not reassuring. I shivered; and drawing my shawl closely around me, again turned to leave the garden. But once more the sound fell upon my ear, and at the same moment my eyes were arrested by the appearance of a white ghost-like figure standing on the steps leading from the haunted room. In spite of my boasted disbelief in supernatural appearances, for an instant I really thought that the shadowy form I beheld must be the denizen of another world. I stood motionless, rooted to the spot by fear. It was but for a moment that the figure was visible; as I gazed upon it, it glided slowly down the steps and disappeared in the gloom. I can smile now to think how terror-struck I was as I watched its disappearance. Suddenly I heard again the sound which had at first awakened my fears, now close at hand, and almost immediately I felt something cold touch my hand. I uttered a faint cry, and should have swooned, I verily believe, if a low familiar whine had not assured me that Nero was by my side, and had thrust his nose into my hand. Hitherto, I had regarded Rose's rough pet with some trepidation, but now his presence was most welcome, and I laid my hand on his shaggy head, in order to keep him by my side. But he would not be retained, and breaking from me, ran down the path towards the spot where my supposed ghost had vanished. The next minute I heard him barking loudly, and the sound of his hearty voice dissipated my absurd fears. 'Nero evidently has no fear of ghosts,' said I to myself, as with growing courage I advanced to discover the cause of his excitement.

As I approached the end of the path, Nero's barking ceased, and to my astonishment, I heard a well-known voice gently coaxing him to be quiet. I turned a corner, and beheld Rose standing by a door which led from the garden into the road. She wore a dress of gray alpaca, and had a white shawl of flimsy texture twisted around her shoulders. She carried her hat and a small travelling-bag in her hand, and had evidently been about to unlock the door, when Nero had arrested her movements. In a moment I was at her side, and laying my hand on her arm inquired: 'What is the meaning of this, Rose?' She had not heard my approach, and my sudden appearance startled her so much, that even in the dim light I could perceive that her face grew very pale.

For a few moments she could make no reply, then shaking off my grasp, she exclaimed: 'Let me alone; I must and will go!' She took hold of

the key, and strove to turn the lock, but her hand trembled so that she could not manage it.

Without a moment's hesitation, I wrenched the key from her grasp and put it into my pocket. 'You shall not leave the garden at this hour,' I said, 'if it is in my power to prevent it.'

Just then a low whistle was heard from the other side of the wall. Rose started at the sound, and wrung her hands in grief and dismay. 'Do not stop me, Miss Bygrave!' she implored. 'I assure you, it is better I should go now. We are acting for the best.'

'How can it be for the best, Rose,' I exclaimed indignantly, 'that you should deceive and pain your kind guardian, for the sake of an unprincipled man? But you have not reflected on what you were about to do. Thank God, I was led here in time to prevent your taking a step which would entail lifelong misery!' So saying, I took her hand, to lead her back to the house. Seeing that I was resolute, she made no opposition. We went at once to her room, which was not far from my own. It was in great disorder, various articles lying scattered about on the floor and chairs. On the dressing-table lay various articles of jewellery and other presents from Mr Aslatt, and a note directed to him in Rose's handwriting.

'And so, you thought by returning these, you could escape from some of your obligations to Mr Aslatt,' I remarked, somewhat scornfully, as I pointed to the pile of gifts. 'I am surprised at you, Rose!'

Overpowered by shame and vexation, she could make no reply, but throwing herself as she was upon the bed, gave vent to her mortification in passionate sobs. I sat down by her side and let her weep unchecked, hoping that no more words would be needed to move her to contrition. After a while she grew calmer, and ceasing to sob, lay still, with her eyes shut. Occasionally her eyelids moved, and I knew that she was not asleep; but I would not be the first to break silence. About an hour passed thus, and then she opened her eyes, and raising herself on her elbow, and shaking back the fair hair that was hanging loose over her face, turned towards me. 'Shall you tell Cousin?' she asked in a faint voice.

'I fear it will be my duty to do so,' I replied; 'though I shrink from the thought of the pain I shall inflict.'

Rose's lip quivered, and tears again gathered in her eyes. 'I know you must consider me very wicked,' she said; 'but indeed I am not so bad as you think. I am fully conscious how much I am indebted to Mr Aslatt, and I am grateful to him for the kindness he has always shewn me.'

'How can you say so,' I interrupted, 'when you have deliberately planned what would cause him the bitterest sorrow?'

'I know, I know!' exclaimed Rose passionately. 'Do you suppose I have ignored the sorrow my flight would cause my dear guardian, or that I would willingly appear so ungrateful? But I had to consider the happiness of another.'

'What other can have stronger claims upon you than Mr Aslatt?' I asked.

Rose coloured, and hesitated for an answer. 'If I had a husband,' she said in a low voice with downcast eyes, 'he would have a higher claim upon me than any one else.'

'Of course,' I returned. 'But you are not married, so I do not see what that has to do with it.'

'This much,' said Rose—'that I have promised to marry Mr. Hammond, and would have been married to-morrow if you had not stopped me; therefore he is more to me than any one else.'

'I am very thankful that I did stop you,' I said. 'How could you expect, Rose, to find any happiness in a union so hastily and wilfully contracted? How could you think of fleeing by night from the home where you have been sheltered since your childhood, where your every wish has been gratified, and ample provision made for your happiness, by one whose noble love you are incapable of appreciating? You have been strangely deluded to think of trusting your life to one who could propose so base a scheme.'

'But what else could we do?' said Rose, trying to defend her lover. 'All things are fair in love and war. We knew that Mr. Aslatt would never consent to our marriage. But if he heard that we were actually married, so that it was out of his power to separate us, he must then have forgiven us.'

'So I have no doubt Mr. Hammond thought,' I remarked. 'But Rose, do you positively think that Mr. Aslatt would withhold his consent to your marriage if he were convinced that it would promote your happiness?'

'No, not if he believed that,' replied Rose. 'But nothing would persuade him that Fritz Hammond could make me a good husband; he is dreadfully prejudiced against him. And he would never overlook Mr. Hammond's inferior position or forgive him for being poor, although he comes of a good family, and no one can say anything against him.'

'It is strange,' I remarked, 'that being of good family he should be in his present position.'

'There now; you are going to find fault with him!' exclaimed Rose pettishly. 'He is not to be blamed for his position, for great misfortunes have reduced him to it.'

'How long is it since you promised to marry Mr. Hammond?' I inquired, after a pause.

'A little while before you came here,' was the reply. 'At first we meant to tell Mr. Aslatt all, and ask his consent; but he seemed so much opposed to Mr. Hammond, that he—I mean we—feared to do so. We thought that if we settled the matter ourselves, it would cause Cousin less pain in the end.'

'Less pain to find that you had been deceiving him, and putting more confidence in a comparative stranger, than in one who has befriended you all your life! It was by strange reasoning you arrived at such a conclusion, Rose!'

She made no reply.

'I suppose you have been in the habit of meeting Mr. Hammond clandestinely in the garden,' I continued; 'you gaining access to it unobserved by means of the so-called haunted rooms, against which you were so careful to warn me. I could not have believed you so skilled in subterfuge.'

Rose coloured deeply, and her head drooped in shame. 'I am very sorry, Miss Bygrave,' she said penitently, after a long pause; 'I see now that I have acted wrongly. I have felt very unhappy all along at the thought of deceiving my good Cousin, for indeed I love him truly; but I

could not bear to think of giving up Mr. Hammond. I have often longed to confess all to you, and I asked Fritz once if I might; but he said it would be most imprudent, and would lead to his being parted from me for ever. And now that will come to pass, I suppose. O dear me! what shall I do? I am the most miserable girl in the world!' So saying, Rose again buried her face in the pillow and sobbed aloud.

'Do you know what I should advise you to do?' I said, when her emotion had somewhat exhausted itself.

'What?' she asked in a smothered voice, without raising her head.

'I think the best thing—the right thing for you to do is to confess all to Mr. Aslatt, and beg his forgiveness. He will accord it, I have no doubt. It will give him great pain to hear of your folly; but it will grieve him less to learn it from your lips than from mine.'

'Oh, I cannot, Miss Bygrave! I cannot tell him! I don't know what he would do or say. He would be so angry with Mr. Hammond!'

'And he has just cause to be,' I could not help saying. 'But surely, Rose, your past experience of Mr. Aslatt's goodness should lead you to put more trust in his kindness of heart. You must know that he seeks your happiness in everything. He will undoubtedly feel indignant with the schoolmaster on account of the underhand manner in which he has acted. But if he is convinced that you are sincerely attached to each other, he will not, I believe, oppose your union; unless he has grave reasons for thinking Mr. Hammond unworthy of the place he holds in your heart. You cannot expect that he will all at once consent to your marrying a man who may be a mere adventurer, for all that we know to the contrary, and who has certainly acted towards Mr. Aslatt in a dishonourable manner, which the hopelessness of his suit does not seem to me to excuse.'

Rose made no reply; and I trusted my words would have their influence. She lay still for some time, evidently engaged in deep and painful thought. Gradually, however, the cloud passed from her brow, and as morning was beginning to dawn, she fell into a sound sleep. I watched her for a while; but by degrees weariness overcame my mental excitement, and I also fell asleep.

BRITISH GUIANA.

On the vast extent of the South American continent the far-reaching empire of Great Britain has planted its flag in one place only; it possesses one-fifth of the country of Guiana, which lies within the Torrid Zone, and forms the northern portion of South America. Of that fifth section of Guiana, which is called Demerara—the capital of which is George-town—only the civilised and cultivated part is known to the dwellers in the colony, or to its chance visitors. The remaining portion of the country was, however, a terra incognita to all but a very few, until Mr. Barrington Brown, in his *Cancos and Camp Life in British Guiana* (London: Edward Stanford), published the results of his explorations.

The civilised and cultivated portion of the

colony of British Guiana consists of a narrow strip of sea-coast. Immediately behind this lies a broad expanse of swampy ground, then comes rising wooded land, and finally mountains and savannas which stretch westward, and are still in their primitive condition, inhabited by little-known Indian tribes and various species of wild animals. It is owing chiefly to the 'Coolie Labour Question' that public attention has been of late years at all directed to British Guiana; and as the colony is likely to become of increased importance, an opportunity of learning particulars about the hitherto mysterious territory which lies *behind* the utilised strip of coast belonging to it, yet utterly unreckoned in the sum of civilisation, is one to be welcomed. This wild region is called vaguely 'the Interior,' and with the exception of a few settlements on the banks of the Lower Berbice, Demerara, and Essequibo rivers, a traveller penetrating its recesses at the present time would behold the same condition of things there which existed in the days of Sir Walter Raleigh. Mr Barrington Brown visited and explored a considerable extent of this 'Interior' while he was engaged on the government geological survey of the West Indies. He accomplished his journeys by means of canoe-travelling; a method preferable to any other, as affording opportunities for close observation, for obtaining picturesque aspects, and in itself very agreeable.

His first voyage was up the Essequibo to the penal settlement of the colony, where his Indian boatmen refused to remain even for one night, such is their timid dread of the very notion of a prison. They would not hang their hammocks in the empty sheds, but crossed the river and camped in the forest, though one of them was suffering severely from fever. At the penal settlement boats were purchased, and a crew hired for the navigation of the Cuyuni, which afforded the Indians ample opportunities for exhibiting their skill. 'They worked splendidly in the cataracts, swimming, diving, and wading in the strong currents from rock to rock, while leading out the tow-ropes and hauling the boats up.' During the journey up this river the traveller encountered in many parts a succession of rapids and cataracts. The difficulties thus entailed, and the graphic account of how these difficulties were surmounted, afford some notion of the laboriousness of nearly every river voyage made by Mr Brown in the course of his explorations.

The scenes through which he passed were of rich and varied beauty. Nothing terrible or threatening met his sight in that unknown land, which seems to bear upon its face one broad beaming smile, answering with fidelity to the smile of the sun. Rocky islets bearing clusters of low trees, whose stems and branches are covered with orchids and wild pines, rise from the broad bosom of the river, while its banks are clothed with forest trees; and on the rocks under its waters is a luxuriant growth of water-plants, bearing exquisite flowers. When the sun is high, gorgeous butterflies, yellow, orange, and azure blue, frequent the water's edge in clusters, or flit over the open spaces near the cataracts; and the river abounds in deep-bodied silvery-scaled fish of various kinds.

The character of the scenery along the banks of the rivers, which form a kind of network over the face of the country in Guiana, is chiefly of the kind described above; but there is no monotony in it, and the traveller is kept constantly amused by the birds and the insect life. Morning and evening are marked by bands of screeching parrots crossing the river to and from their feeding-grounds, and all along the banks the kingfisher and the ibis abound. The Indian villages are generally within a short distance of the river, and the harmless people are unusually smart in their attire. The women wear an apron called a *queyon*, formed of cotton and bead-work, ingeniously manufactured, each bead being slipped on the cotton thread in its proper place as it is being woven. The traveller frequently halted at the villages while the natives prepared cassava bread for him, and he had a fair opportunity of forming a judgment upon their intellectual status and social condition. Both are superior to those of the average 'natives' with which books have made us acquainted, and Mr Brown notes as a 'pleasing feature' of the British Guiana Indians, that, as a rule, they treat their women well, regarding them as equals and not as slaves. The plauters of the civilised portion of the country, kidnappers and tyrants of the 'coolie,' might learn lessons of humanity and justice from the 'savages' of the 'Interior.'

A march through primeval forest to the Puruni was a less pleasant experience than the river voyage; for the 'ticks' which infest the forest took possession of the travellers. Of the numerous kinds of pestilent insects Mr Brown gives a horrid description; but he counterbalances it by that of the birds, the trees, the flowers, the skies, and the wonderfully exhilarating influence of the climate.

The many mysterious sounds which proceed from primeval forest in all countries where such forest exists, have given rise to superstitious beliefs and fears. On their return journey to the penal settlement, Mr Brown was made acquainted with the legendary 'Didi' of those remote realms of forest and river. 'The first night after leaving Peaimah,' he says, 'we heard a long, loud, and most melancholy whistle proceeding from the depths of the forest; at which some of the men exclaimed in an awed tone of voice: "The Didi!" Two or three times the whistle was repeated, sounding like that made by a human being, beginning in a high key and dying slowly and gradually away in a low one. There were conflicting opinions amongst the men regarding the origin of these sounds. Some said they proceeded from the wild hairy man or Didi of the Indians; others that they were produced by a large and poisonous snake which lives in one tree from its youth up, where it attains a great size, living on birds which are so unfortunate as to alight near it, and thus become victims to its powers of fascination. The Didi is said by the Indians to be a short, thick-set, and powerful wild man, whose body is covered with hair, and who lives in the forest. A belief in the existence of this fabulous creature is universal over the whole of British, Venezuelan, and Brazilian Guiana. On the Demerara River I afterwards met a half-bred wood-ent, who related an encounter that he had with two Didi, a male and female, in which he successfully resisted their attacks with his axe.'

The main object of the explorer's most important voyage up the Essequibo was to obtain a sight of the great Roraima Mountain, which has been seen by few white men.

He began to ascend from the river-bank, under the guidance of an Indian, at the valley of the Cotinga; and first he saw, rising two hundred feet above the level of the plain, the great Wasipu or Sun Mountain, formed of horizontal beds of sandstone (this formation is as peculiar to the region as the strange level hill-tops are to the Cape district of South Africa), the alternate hard and soft layers of which produced most singular traces on its sides, while near it stood two curious conical peaks. He rested that night in an old mud-walled palm-thatched house, situated on a great lonely elevated land, and early next forenoon the travellers rounded the end of the Sun Mountain, and a glorious view of Roraima burst upon them, with the sun's rays lighting up its curious details. 'Turn,' says our author, 'in any direction I would, most wonderful scenery was presented to my view, from the great pink precipiced Roraima in the north-west, looking like a huge fortification surrounded by a gigantic glacier, to the great undulating plain stretching southward as far as the eye could reach, where at the horizon land melted into sky.'

This wonderful mountain is one of the greatest natural curiosities on the face of the earth, and it is much to be regretted that Mr. Brown was not able to inspect more closely, and examine its structure and individual features more in detail. This was, however, rendered impossible by that prosaic but irresistible obstacle, want of food! In the vicinity of the mountain he found only deserted villages, and the scanty supply of provisions which he and his guide had carried up from the plain was speedily exhausted. Our traveller succeeded in ascending the sloping portion of the marvellous mountain—in which Nature seems to have furnished Art with a perfect model of a fortress—to a height of five thousand one hundred feet above the level of the sea. Between the highest point reached by him and the foot of the great perpendicular portion, towering high above, is a band of thick forest. 'Looking up at the great wall of rock,' says the writer, 'two thousand feet in height, I could see that a forest covered its top, and that in places on its sides where small trees or shrubs could gain a hold with their roots, there they clung. The great beds of white, pink, and red sandstone of which it is composed are interbedded with layers of red shale, the whole resting upon a great bed of diorite.'

One tries in vain to picture to one's fancy this wondrous mass of upheaved earth, stone, and forests, looking like a fortress reared by Titans against the assaults of all the forces of Nature besides. Science tells us that Roraima and its surrounding singularly shaped neighbours once stood as islands in the ocean; but at what period of the earth's history, how far back in the awful lapses of time, who can say? 'If,' says the author, 'any mammals then lived upon them, when the sea washed the bases of their cliffs, the descendants of those mammals may live there still, for all communication with their tops and the surrounding country has been ever since effectually cut off by their perpendicular sides.'

The length of Roraima is about twelve miles;

and its top is perfectly level. 'The area of the surface,' says Mr. Brown, 'must be considerable, for Sir R. Schomburgk, who visited its southern end, to the westward of the point to which I ascended, describes some beautiful waterfalls as leaping from its sides, forming the drainage of part of its top, and when viewing it from a mountain on the Upper Mazurini, I distinctly saw, at a distance of thirty miles, an enormous waterfall on its north-east side, of very considerable width and extraordinary height.'

Next in importance to the great mountain Roraima is the great Kaieteur Fall, which the traveller reached by the difficult ascent of Kaieteur. The very existence of this beautiful Fall was previously unknown to the dwellers in George-town, the capital of Demerara, who were astonished to learn that their colony possessed such a gigantic natural wonder; and indeed received Mr. Brown's account of it with some incredulity. On a subsequent journey, undertaken by command of the governor Sir John Scott, Mr. Brown and some other English gentlemen made a thorough examination and a scientific report of the Fall.

The Kaieteur Valley is of great extent; bounded by gloomy mountains, whose outlines are broken by gaps and gorges, whence noisy cascades pour down the sides of the great sandstone steeps, while in the far distance is seen the upper portion of the Kaieteur pouring its foaming water over the precipice edge into the depths below. The journey from the landing-place on the river to the head of the Fall is difficult, the way lying through blocks of sandstone and through tangled forest, where it is necessary to cut away the mass of vines, bushrocks, shrubs, and undergrowth which obstruct the path. The regular forest ends in a confused mass of rocks at the water's edge, covered with shrubs and mosses, and directly facing the Fall at a distance of a quarter of a mile from its foot. A more perfect position from which to contemplate this wonder of Nature could not be conceived. The travellers stood on the verge of the rock reef, and before them thundered the Kaieteur Fall, from a height of eight hundred and twenty-two feet, in a cataract four hundred and twenty-two yards wide, fed by the stream at a velocity of four miles an hour; its contact with the water of the basin being a confused scene of fleecy masses of tossing waters, spurring high in the air in front of the downpour, and giving birth to mist-clouds, which rose continuously upwards and over the precipice on the right.

Two of the exploring party swam across the foaming river and visited the edge of the basin on the eastern side; after which they returned to the landing, accompanied by all the Indians but three. The others did not like to pass the night in such a mysterious place. Mr. Brown and one of his friends had poles rigged up and lashed together under a large rock, which formed a sort of cave, where they slung their hammocks for the night. That must have been a night never to be forgotten, when, in the primeval wilds of that unknown land, the traveller lay in his swinging couch and watched and listened to the eternal fall and multitudinous roar of the mighty waters. 'A subdued light,' he says, 'penetrated even into our valley of shadows, and I knew that the moon must have risen above the eastern horizon. By this light I could make out the brink of the Fall

against the sky; and as I gazed upon it two bright stars rose slowly beyond, looking as if they had emerged from the water itself. Then the first rays of the moon, as it rose above the mountain in the east, shed a silvery light across the Fall's crest, and lit up a portion of the descending fleecy column.' During the day the sun's rays, shining on the mist, produced a lovely rainbow, reaching from the top to the foot of the Fall, which, moving slowly onwards with the mist, faded gradually away, while with each accession of mist a new one was formed.

After they had thoroughly enjoyed the spectacle from opposite the foot of the Fall, the travellers proceeded to its head, camped in the bush on the river's brink, about fifty feet above the edge of the Fall, and there made their measurements. On both evenings of their stay they watched with interest the swallows' homeward flight to their roosting-places in a cave *behind the Fall*. The birds came late in the afternoon in large flocks from all quarters of the compass, and wheeled round in great circles at different altitudes. Gradually one flock amalgamated with another, till at last near sundown they had gathered into two or three immense bodies, which kept wheeling round in a compact mass about one hundred yards above the heads of the travellers. Mr Brown asked his friend how he would describe their numbers, and he replied that he thought 'myriads of millions' would about do it.

While the travellers were wondering how the birds would get into the cave behind the giant sheet of falling water, the question was solved in an extraordinary manner, and the intruders on that wonderful scene beheld a spectacle which in itself would have made the occasion memorable. 'Suddenly a portion of the mass swooped down with incredible, with extraordinary velocity to the edge of the Fall, seemingly close to the face of the column of water, and then being lost to our view. The rushing sound of their wings in their downward flight was very strange, and produced the feeling that birds of ill omen were about. Approaching the edge of the precipice we waited to see the next lot go down, so as to observe how they managed to get behind the water. We had not to wait long before down dropped a cloud of them over the edge, past the face of the Fall, for about one hundred feet; then, with the rapidity of lightning, they changed their downward course to one at right angles, and thus shot through the mist on either side into the gloomy cave. Their motions were so rapid that we could hardly make out how they were executed. It appeared to me that, as they swooped down, their wings were but half spread, and their heads downwards; but after passing the edge they turned their bodies in a horizontal position, descending by gravity alone until they arrived at the required level, when they again made use of their wings and flew off at right angles into the cave. Just before dusk the greater portion descended in a continuous stream for a considerable time, but small flocks and single birds kept arriving until it was quite dark. When a single bird shot down, its velocity was so great that it seemed to form a short continuous black line against the sky.' This gives the reader a vivid idea of the speed with which a bird can cleave the air while on the swoop.

At all times the valley of the Kaieteur is beau-

tiful, but it is most beautiful when, in the afternoon, great shadows are flung across it, and the opening is lit up by the golden reflection of the sky over the great plains beyond. On the Upper Essequibo—which is inhabited by caymans of great size 'and fearfully tame,' there are also several beautiful Falls; and as for a great portion of its extent the banks of the river are totally devoid of human population, the birds and mammals are as tame as the caymans. Jaguars, whose prey are the wild hogs, abound, and large tigers are tolerably numerous. It is curious that they should not be more numerous, for no animals prey upon them, and the few killed by wandering Indians would not affect their number in any sensible degree. Not until the thirtieth day of their voyage on the Upper Essequibo did the travellers see any 'natives'; then they fell in with a tribe of redskins with artificially elongated and flattened heads, who were terrified at the sight of white men. They proved to be harmless and friendly people. It is said that in this wild region, farther to the south, near the head-waters of the Trombetas, there is a tribe who have ponds of water encircled by stockades, to which they retire for the night, sleeping with their bodies submerged. This, however, the author holds to be an Indian 'yarn.'

The reader cannot weary of the details of the numerous river-journeys by which Mr Brown has succeeded in exploring the unknown 'Interior' of British Guiana. In the course of them he has penetrated into recesses of nature untrodden previously by any human foot, and made acquaintance with plants, animals, birds, and fishes of which only the names had previously been known to a few of the specially learned in such matters. Our insufficient sketch of the nature of the book in which he has narrated his experiences, is not designed to satisfy, but to excite curiosity on the subject, and to direct the attention of such readers as are interested in the revelation of nature, for which our age will be celebrated in the history of intellectual labour, to Mr Barrington Brown's monograph of British Guiana.

ROBERT BRAMLEIGH'S WILL.

LAST will and testament! Words of solemn import—and of unreasonable terror to some people. How foolish and even culpable is it to leave a matter of so much importance to the last hours of life, when the strongest intellect must be incapable of fully considering and well weighing the final disposition of our worldly goods and effects—a disposition which is to affect the welfare and perhaps the happiness of those we love the best.

Most people have heard the well-worn aphorism which tells us that the man who is his own lawyer has a fool for his client. In the incident I am about to relate, a woman—I suppose the aphorism applies to either sex—proved to the contrary. It is the exception, however, that *proves* the rule. Had she remained her own lawyer, instead of consulting me, the probability is that she would have succeeded in her designs upon a large fortune, designs which I happily succeeded in frustrating.

It had been a busy day with me. I had been

working hard getting up evidence in a railway accident case, and was putting up my papers with a sigh of relief. Another forty minutes and I should be at home. I could almost smell the boiled capon and oyster-sauce which I knew were being prepared for me. 'There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip,' says the proverb; and in my case it proved only too true; for just as I was tying up the last bundle of papers, the office boy put his head in at the door and dispelled the tempting vision.

'A woman to see you, if you please, sir. She won't give no name. Says she's a stranger.'

'A stranger?' I repeated. 'What is she like? Is she a common person?'

'Not exactly, sir,' replied the lad.

'A lady?' I asked.

'O no, sir.'

'What is she, then?'

Arthur was a droll lad. I had brought him to London from the country, to oblige an old college friend. I am afraid that he was not of much use in the office, but he used to keep the other clerks in a good temper by his amusing ways and dry remarks.

Arthur paused, as if considering, and then, with a look of intelligence, as much as to say that he had hit the nail on the head this time, he answered: 'Well, sir, she's a sort of betwixt and between.'

'Not a bad definition, Arthur. Ask the "betwixt and between" up-stairs.'

A tall middle-aged woman entered and took the seat I placed for her. She appeared to belong to the class Arthur had so happily designated as 'betwixt and between'; a person, rather than a lady. I rather pride myself on my power of reading faces, but I confess that hers puzzled me. It was absolutely void of expression. The features were hard and immovable, as if carved out of stone. She wore a closely fitting bonnet, under which the gray hair was neatly brushed in two smooth bands. I generally form my opinion of any one's character from the expression of the eyes and mouth; but here I was at fault. An ugly scar on the left cheek extended across the lips, distorting the mouth, and the eye on the same side was sightless. I always feel at a disadvantage with one-eyed people; I never know what they are driving at. It is so hard to fathom their thoughts.

My visitor removed her gloves and, carefully smoothing them, placed them on the table beside her. She then produced from her pocket a large foolscap envelope, from which she drew a piece of paper folded longways. This she handed to me, explaining, in a hard monotonous voice, that she had been sent to me by her master, Mr Robert Bramleigh of Coleman Street, who was dangerously ill—in fact was not expected to live many hours. The paper, she said, had been written by his direction, and signed by him for his will that afternoon. Fearing lest it should not be in a

proper form, he had desired her to take it to the nearest lawyer, and have one prepared according to the law.

I unfolded the paper, and read as follows:

'In the name of God, Amen. I leave my body to the ground and my soul to Almighty God who gave it. Now this is the will of me, ROBERT BRAMLEIGH of 550 Coleman Street. I give and leave all my houses, lands, money, and everything that I have, to HANNAH CHURTON, my house-keeper, as a reward for her long and faithful services. Signed by me on Tuesday, December 12th, 1868.

ROBERT BRAMLEIGH.

Witnesses—

JAMES BURN.

MARGARET SIMS.'

I examined the writing carefully. The signature 'Robert Bramleigh' was weak and shaky. The will itself was written in a masculine-looking hand of singular decision and boldness. The characters were large and well formed.

The will had evidently been prepared by some one who had had but an imperfect knowledge of the form to be used for such a purpose. The solemn appeal to the Deity and the bequest of the testator's body and soul was an old form, much in vogue with our grandfathers, who generally headed a will with one or two pious phrases.

The document shewn to me was, however, sufficient to give Hannah Churton all Mr Bramleigh's property. There were the requisite number of witnesses, and the Principal Registry of Her Majesty's Court of Probate would have granted letters of administration with the will annexed (the appointment of an executor having been omitted, the ordinary probate could not have been obtained), on one of the attesting witnesses making an affidavit that the will had been executed by the testator in the presence of himself and the other attesting witness, and that they had at the same time, and in the presence of each other, subscribed their names thereto as witnesses.

Now I am always very particular about wills; I think they are too serious to be settled in a hurry. I never will allow a client to execute one until I am convinced that its purport is perfectly understood.

'You are Mrs Churton, I presume?' I asked.

'I am,' she replied, looking me unflinchingly in the face. Somehow I felt suspicious that things were not so fair as they should be. I questioned her rather closely; but the only admission I obtained from her was that she had written the will, but that it was at her master's dictation. I asked her if he had any family, but could get nothing from her save that he did not care to have his private affairs discussed by strangers. Worst of all, I gave up the contest. I offered to prepare a more formal document; but before doing so, I declared that it was necessary I should see Mr Bramleigh. I named the omission of the appointment of an executor. This seemed rather to rouse her. She asked whether she could not be named as executrix. The more aversion she shewed to my seeing her master the more convinced I felt that

something was wrong; and seeing that I was not to be moved from my purpose, she at last gave in; proposing, however, that I should accompany her back, as she greatly feared it would be too late if left till the morning.

A cab soon took us to No. 559 Coleman Street. It was a large gloomy old-fashioned house with a spacious entrance-hall. I was taken into the dining-room, and asked to wait while Mr Bramleigh was being prepared for my visit. The furniture in the room was old and very massive. Some handsome oil-paintings graced the walls. I am very fond of pictures, so raising the lamp, I walked round the room slowly inspecting them. On the right of the fire-place I came upon a picture with its face turned towards the wall. I think I must have the bump of inquisitiveness—if there is such a bump—largely developed, for anything approaching a mystery is sure to raise my curiosity. I turned the picture. It was the portrait in oils of a young and very beautiful girl in a dark riding-habit. Hearing footsteps outside the door, I restored the picture to the position in which I had found it, and as I did so I saw written at the bottom of the frame 'Magdalen Bramleigh.'

The footsteps I had heard were those of the housemaid, who had come to announce that Mr Bramleigh was ready to see me. I followed her up-stairs, and was ushered into a large comfortable-looking bedroom. A cheerful fire burned in the grate. Facing it was a large four-post bedstead hung with white curtains, and at the head of the bed Mrs Churton was standing, with a small table in front of her, on which were placed an inkstand and some paper. She pulled back the curtain, and I saw an old man propped up by pillows, his face drawn and the eyes very much sunk. I almost feared that he was too far gone to make a will; but after speaking with him for a little time, I felt satisfied that the intellect was quite clear.

Turning to Mrs Churton, I told her that she need not wait; I would ring if I wanted anything. 'Yes, go—go, Hannah!' cried the sick man; and I fancied that I could detect an eagerness in his voice, as if he desired her absence rather than her presence. As Mrs Churton left the room I caught sight of the reflection of her face in the glass over the chimney-piece, but I do not think she would have scowled quite so much had she known that I was looking. I began by asking Mr Bramleigh what were his wishes with regard to his will. In low tones he told me that he desired to leave everything to Hannah Churton, his housekeeper, as a reward for her long and faithful services. I will not tire the reader by repeating the whole of our conversation. After great difficulty I extracted from him that he had no relatives save an only daughter, whom he had discarded, her fault being that she had married a young fellow in the army to whom her father had taken an unaccountable aversion. My own opinion was—and as the result turned out, it proved to be correct—that his mind had been poisoned against him by Hannah Churton, whose influence over her master was evidently very great. I thought of the sweet face of the portrait I had seen in the dining-room—doubtless that of the discarded daughter—and desiring or not desiring, I determined to fight a battle on her behalf.

I spoke gravely to the old man, although without much hope of success, but at last I got him to confess that he had had no intention of making his housekeeper his sole heiress until she had herself broached the subject to him. Her plan had been to artfully insinuate that the love of the newly married couple would not last very long on a lieutenant's pay; and that as he had only married Miss Bramleigh for her money, he would soon tire of her when he found that she had nothing. She had then pledged herself to procure a separation, when she would make over everything left her by Mr Bramleigh, to his daughter. She certainly must have had great power over the old man to induce him to agree to such a scheme. I proposed to Mr Bramleigh that he should leave his property to some one on whom he could rely, in trust for his daughter. I also volunteered, although I have an aversion to the trouble and responsibility of a trusteeship, my services as trustee for this purpose. My arguments prevailed. He assented; and I prepared a will accordingly, the old man requesting that his medical man, Dr Ramsey, should be nominated as my co-trustee, and that an annuity of fifty pounds should be paid to Hannah Churton for life. I inwardly rebelled at this. My dislike to this woman was now so great that I could cheerfully have seen her cut out of the will without a farthing. The doctor arrived just as I had finished, and expressed his willingness to share the responsibility with me, which seemed to please Mr Bramleigh very much. Our names were therefore included as trustees.

I read the will to him very carefully, explaining, as I did so, its full effect. When I had finished, he muttered: 'Quite right—quite right; but I am afraid Hannah will not be pleased.' I counselled him not to mention it to her; and my advice seemed to satisfy him.

Ringing the bell, I requested Mrs Churton to summon James Burn and Margaret Sims, the two servants who had witnessed the first will. As soon as they were in the room, I gave Mr Bramleigh a pen, and placing the document before him, I said distinctly, so that all might hear: 'This which I have just read to you is your final will, and you request James Burn and Margaret Sims to witness your execution of it?' 'It is—I do,' he solemnly said, as with feeble fingers he wrote his name. The two awe-stricken domestics then added theirs, and I think their hands shook more than the testator's. Hannah Churton was a silent spectator of the whole of this; but I could not see her face, as she stood in the background, out of the light of the lamp.

Before allowing any one to leave the room, I placed the will in a large envelope. Fastening it with wax, I impressed it with Mr Bramleigh's monogram and crest by means of a seal that was in the tray of the inkstand. The old man watched me closely, and when I had finished, he said: 'Keep it—till it is wanted;' thus relieving me of a great embarrassment, for I did not like leaving it in the power of Hannah Churton, lest she should tamper with it.

On our way down-stairs, Dr Ramsey told me that his patient was rapidly sinking, and that he doubted whether he would live another twenty-four hours.

Taking him into the dining-room and shutting

the door, I told him my suspicions of the house-keeper, and that I felt afraid of leaving Mr Bramleigh alone with her all night. He agreed with me, and promised to send his assistant to watch till the morning, when, if Mr Bramleigh should still be living, he would on his own responsibility place a trustworthy nurse in charge. The housekeeper opened the door to let us out.

'It is all right, Mrs Churton,' I maliciously said as the doctor wished her good-night. 'I am quite satisfied now. The will will be safe in my keeping. By-the-bye,' I added, looking her sharply in the face, 'had you not better let your master's friends know of the danger he is in? Dr Ramsey says he does not think he will last much longer.'

She mumbled something in reply, but I could not catch what it was. I stayed talking upon indifferent subjects, to while away the time until the arrival of Dr Ramsey's assistant. Mrs Churton, however, was, unlike her sex, remarkably reticent; I could only get the shortest replies from her. She seemed very much astonished and rather displeased when Dr Ramsey returned with his assistant. He explained to her that although there was no chance of saving his patient's life, yet his last moments might be alleviated by skilled attendance; and therefore, as he himself could not stay all night, he had brought his assistant for that purpose.

In one's experience of mankind we find that it is possible to be sometimes too clever. Mrs Hannah Churton was very clever, but she committed two great mistakes. The first was in consulting a lawyer. The will drawn by her—for so it really had been—might have been upset on the ground of undue influence. I say 'might have been,' for there is nothing so hard to prove as undue influence. The great point against her was the ousting of a child in favour of a stranger. Yet it would have been far from easy to prove that she was responsible for this, as Mr Bramleigh's strange aversion to the army was well known; he often had been heard to threaten to disinherit his daughter if she ever should engage herself to a military man—doubtless thereby defeating his purpose, for the female mind is such that from Eve to the present generation the thing forbidden is the most desired. I think the probabilities are that the matter would have been compromised, and Hannah Churton enriched by a few thousands of her master's wealth.

Mistake number two was as follows. The doctor had gone up-stairs to install his assistant, leaving me standing in the hall with the housekeeper. Fumbling in her pocket she pulled out a roll of bank-notes; thrusting these into my hands, she told me that it was her master's wish that I should take them for my trouble. I unrolled them, and found two for ten, and one for five, pounds. Twenty-five pounds!

This was sharp, and yet foolish of Hannah. Had I been as great a rogue as she was—and I suppose by her offering them to me that she thought I was—she was retaining an important witness on her side, and therefore there was a certain amount of sharpness about it. On the other hand it was exceedingly foolish. The sum was so much out of proportion to my services that it was palpably a bribe. I am afraid that had it come out in evidence, it would have lost

her the case and perhaps struck me off the rolls.

A long legal experience has taught me that in all dealings with doubtful people one's safety lies in having a good witness. I waited till the doctor came down-stairs, occupying myself by entering the numbers of the notes in my pocket-book.

'Look, doctor!' I cried as he appeared, shewing him the notes. 'Mr Bramleigh is a liberal paymaster.' Turning to Mrs Churton, I said: 'This will amply repay me.'

Retaining the note for five pounds, I returned her the other two. She took them from me without saying a word, but a black look came over her face. I think she began to suspect me. I got home very late that night. The capon was more than done, and so was the oyster sauce!

Mr Bramleigh died the next morning at ten o'clock. Soon after I had left he became unconscious, in which state he remained till shortly before his death, when there was a rally. Opening his eyes with an eager look, as if he missed something, he threw one arm outside the coverlet, and crying 'Magdalen, Magdalen!' he obeyed the summons which bade him thole his assize—yes, in that dead court where 'Not proven' is unknown. Guilty or not guilty? Who shall say?

The funeral took place on the Saturday, but an engagement prevented me from following. Mrs Churton had written requesting that I would attend with the will, which still remained in my possession with the one drawn by her.

I arrived at the house a little after one o'clock, and was at once taken into the dining-room, where I found Dr Ramsey, Mr Robson (a brother-practitioner), and a handsome young fellow, who was introduced to me as Lieutenant Maitland, the late Mr Bramleigh's son-in-law.

The door opened, and a young lady entered. It did not require any introduction to tell me that she was the original of the portrait, still with its front turned towards the wall. Her face was very beautiful, notwithstanding its extreme paleness and the tear-swollen eyelids. She seated herself by the fire, her husband standing behind her, leaning his arms on the back of the chair.

Mrs Churton had closely followed Magdalen Maitland into the room. She was dressed in deep mourning, and wore a black crape cap; thus offering a marked contrast to Mrs Maitland, who was wearing a grey dress rather travel-stained. Apparently she had had no time to prepare her mourning.

Dr Ramsey politely pulled forward a chair for the housekeeper. Taking it from him with a cold 'Thank you,' she placed it at the end of the table, directly facing me. Very stern and forbidding she looked in her black garments—her features immovable, her hands resting on her knees.

I was about to unseal the envelope containing the will, when Lieutenant Maitland interrupted me.

'One moment, if you please,' he said, placing his hand on my arm. 'Before this will is read, I wish to say a few words. Mrs Churton tells me that Mr Bramleigh has left her everything unconditionally. I simply wish to express my firm belief that Mr Bramleigh could only have been induced to make such a will by unfair and

foul means. Although I have been the cause of an estrangement between father and daughter, I cannot think that he could so far forget his love for her as to strip her of everything. It is my intention, for her sake, to contest this will; and it is with that view that I have requested my old friend, Mr Robson, to be present to-day as my legal adviser.

His frank manly face was flushed with honest excitement as, leaning over the back of his wife's chair, he took her face between his hands and kissed it. 'For your sake—not mine, dearest,' I heard him whisper.

Mr Robson bowed when his name was mentioned. Mrs Churton still retained her position. A painful silence succeeded, unbroken save by the rustling of the paper as I broke the seal.

Magdalen Maitland had stolen her hand into her husband's protecting clasp. I withdrew the will from its cover, and looked at Mrs Churton. Would that firm face quiver when the lottery proved a blank, and the fair castle fell because its foundations had been built in the sand? I could not help admiring the courage of the woman, and certainly felt curious as to how she would stand the ordeal through which she had to pass.

I read the will slowly and distinctly. It was very short. Save the annuity of fifty pounds to Hannah Churton for life, everything was left to Dr Ramsey and myself, in trust for Magdalen Maitland, to be settled on her as we in our discretion should think fit.

Astonishment is a mild word to express the feelings of those present, nor will I attempt to do so. My tale lies with Hannah Churton. Starting to her feet, she pushed the chair from her, and stretching out one arm, gave utterance to a fierce torrent of invective. The veil was lifted, and the native coarseness of the woman's nature stood revealed. It was as I had feared. Unmindful of the bounty of but too generous a master, she heaped obloquy on his memory, and fearlessly asserted that she had wasted the best years of her life in his service!

Magdalen Maitland covered her ears with her hands, to shut out the hard words. Her husband led her towards the door; but Hannah Churton intercepted them. Tearing her cap from her head, she threw it on the ground before the frightened girl.

'Trample on it!' she cried in a frenzied voice. 'Your father's victim has no right to wear it!' I must admit that she looked grandly tragic as she declaimed these fierce words. I felt half sorry for the poor defeated creature.

We had not a little trouble before the will was proved. It was strongly opposed by a sharp young fellow, who took up the case for Hannah Churton. It was, however, ultimately settled by an addition of another fifty pounds being made to the annuity she was to receive.

Lieutenant Maitland sold out of the army; and a rich relative of his dying soon afterwards, he inherited a large estate in Devonshire, where he and his wife went to reside.

Nine years have passed since then; and Mrs Maitland declares that there are 'silver threads among the gold.' The cares of a young family have somewhat marred her good looks, but they will live again in my little god-daughter Magdalen, who promises to rival her mother in beauty.

THE OLD HOME.

It is not a castle olden,
Standing in the sunlight golden,
Relic of the Past,
With a deep moat mossed and hoary,
And a ray from bygone glory
O'er its ruin east.

But a mansion fair and pleasant,
Known alike of peer and peasant
For its kindly cheer,
With its glades and leafy covers,
Ferry haunts of loitering lovers,
And the shy wild-deer.

Crimson blossoms redly glowing,
Flickering shadows o'er it throwing,
Vell the lichen's stain;
Sunset gleams of rose and amber,
Where the ivy tendrils clamber,
Flush each casement pane.

Lurks no ghost behind the arras,
Happy midnight dreams to harass,
Wakes no Banshee's wail;
Tapestry, nor antique lumber,
Doth its sunny hall encumber,
Shield, nor suit of mail.

Morning wakes its household noises,
Busy footsteps, laughing voices,
As in days of yore;
Burns its warm hearth too, brightly,
Where the gay groups gather nightly,
Though it knows no more

Hearts, by other loves supplanted;
Steps, that once its precincts haunted,
Hushed by mount and sea;
Only my sad heart remembers
Flowery Junes and dark Decembers,
Spent, old home, in thee!

Shadows pace the garden alleys,
Wander with me through the valleys,
Join my woodland walk;
And by streamlets willow-shaded,
Where the song-birds serenaded,
Parted lovers talk—

Idly talking, idly dreaming,
With the sunlit waters gleaming
Golden at their feet,
While the fair-haired children plunder,
Rosy-mouthed, with blue-eyed wonder,
Fruitage wild and sweet.

When I stretch my hands in greeting,
Each familiar name repeating,
Straightway from my sight,
Back to angel bowers they vanish,
Even as beams of morning banish
Visions of the night.

J. L. L.

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CAPTAIN COPPIN.

Among the many marvels of art in the present day is the art of lifting sunk vessels from the bottom of the sea, or of rescuing them in a sadly injured condition from dangerous ledges of rock, where in former times they must have inevitably been lost. Of course, this marvel is primarily due to the agency of steam acting on pumps, diving-bells, huge chains, and other apparatus; but it is clear that without the audacity of resource possessed by men skilled in maritime affairs, all mechanical agency whatsoever would be valueless.

It is pleasant to know that while science has been doing so much for people who live on dry land, seamen who peril their lives on the great ocean that wraps round the world have not been neglected; and to maritime invention are added civil laws and arrangements distinctly intended to preserve life and property at sea. In touching on this interesting subject, we may first speak of Salvage as a means for stimulating the efforts of humanity. Salvage is the payment due to persons who save a vessel that has been abandoned by its crew, or which is placed in some peculiar jeopardy. On the owners of ships so rescued, rests the obligation of paying a reasonable sum as salvage; and in the case of any dispute regarding the amount, the matter is settled by a decision of the Court of Admiralty. When the vessel has been insured against sea-risks by the underwriters at Lloyd's, or others, these, for their own interests, make compensation for the recovery of the jeopardised property. Seafaring populations on the English coast are ordinarily prompt in helping to save the lives of shipwrecked mariners, as well as in recovering and taking charge of goods washed ashore. At one time the wreckage of vessels driven ashore became a prey to depredators, known as wreckers; but scandals of this kind do not now occur, partly owing to the vigilance of magistrates, police, and coastguard, and partly to that of the numerous agents of Lloyd's, whose duty it is to take charge of any species of property driven ashore. Like an invisible army, these

agents of Lloyd's are established all round the coasts of the British Islands, ready to pounce upon and secure every article which the waves bring to land. The plundering of wreckage, such as Sir Walter Scott picturesquely describes in *The Pirate*, could not now therefore take place. As far as the law can do it, the property imperilled on the deep is protected from depredation.

Latterly, the succouring of vessels in a distressed condition at sea has not been altogether left to chance or to private adventure, under the prospect of salvage. There has sprung up a system of recovery on a great scale. Salvage Companies possessing a large capital have been established in London, Liverpool, and elsewhere. By means of powerful and skilfully managed steam-tugs, they undertake to rescue, if possible, ships that have been thought to be almost beyond human aid. There is something heart-stirring in the idea of a few heroic men rallying forth in the forlorn hope of lifting a ship sunk to the bottom of the sea, floating it safely into harbour, and restoring to the owner that which had been given up as lost. Proceedings of this kind take their place alongside of the feats performed by means of life-boats, renowned among the maritime glories of England.

In the wonderful art of lifting and floating sunk vessels, no one has so greatly distinguished himself as Captain William Coppin, who is said to have recovered a hundred and forty ships that would otherwise in all probability have never more been heard of. Perhaps we may some day have a record of the more interesting cases in which the captain was concerned. In the meanwhile, trusting to newspaper accounts, we draw attention to the proceedings that lately took place in endeavouring to rescue a vessel stranded on a dangerous ledge of rocks at Bembridge, Isle of Wight. The vessel is described as the clipper bark *Alphila*, with ballast, bound from Amsterdam to Cardiff. Its length was a hundred and ninety-six and a half feet, with eighteen feet depth of hold. It was a handsomely-built, smart-sailing vessel, which cost thirteen thousand pounds—most likely sent on a mission to take a cargo of coal from

Wales to Holland. It was fully insured at Lloyd's. This fine vessel encountered a tremendous gale in December 1877, and notwithstanding the efforts of Mr G. E. Stone, master, was driven with violence on the above-mentioned ledge of rocks. The unfortunate vessel was thrown to a considerable distance among the rocks, and there she stuck, with underplating damaged, her sides bulged in, water getting freely into the hold, and with mainmast fractured. To all appearance the ship was finished. By no ordinary process could she be got off. What was to be done? Sad to leave a thing of beauty and considerable cost to be dashed to pieces by recurring storms in the Channel!

There were grave consultations on the matter by the owners and underwriters. The vessel was too valuable even with all her injuries to be abandoned outright. It was resolved to employ a Salvage Company to endeavour to get the vessel floated into port. A vigorous attempt of this kind was made, and it failed. The *Alphita* still stuck. As if all hope of recovery was gone, and not wishing to be plagued any more about it, the underwriters sold the vessel where she lay for two hundred pounds. There was a bargain. A thirteen thousand pound vessel disposed of for the paltry sum of two hundred pounds. The purchase, however, was a pure hazard. If the vessel could not be got off, it was not worth anything. Already, an immense deal of trouble had been taken to float the *Alphita*, and it was of no use. Two hundred pounds was accordingly not a bad offer. The purchasers were the Salvage Steam-ship Company of London, of which Captain Coppin is the managing director.

The case is crucial. A vessel is stuck upon a reef of rocks from which no earthly power appears to be able to dislodge it. Captain Coppin yokes to this seeming impossibility. Let us mark the resources of genius.

At the spot where the *Alphita* was fixed with a leaning to one side, the tide rises about twelve feet. There, in the first place, is an agency of nature, which it would be clearly important to utilise. That is to say, make use of the rise of the tide. Very good; but there were holes in the vessel that would require to be plugged before she would budge. All this was done. The damaged parts of the vessel were cut off by water-tight bulkheads, and the rents in the exterior sheathing were repaired. There was also a good deal of calking of open seams. Until these various arrangements were effected, the vessel was strapped down, to prevent bumping or further damage. Wedges were also employed to make the vessel stand upright. When these and other means had been adopted, it was thought that the vessel was ready to be pumped dry and floated off. Now were set agoing powerful steam-pumps, capable of throwing out six thousand tons of water an hour. The vessel began to be buoyant. There were some protuberances of rock in the way which would prevent her slipping into deep water. To make a

proper channel, three hundred tons of rock were cut away, and now, as every one believed, there was nothing to prevent the vessel being tugged into the open sea.

It was a great day, when all things being in readiness, the Salvage Company's steamer *Sherbro*, and the dockyard tug *Camel*, made their appearance on the scene, and set to work on the hitherto disabled vessel. What a shout from the sailors when taken in haul by the tugs, the *Alphita* quietly glided into deep water, and was towed along a distance of ten or twelve miles to Portsmouth. We say this was a triumph of art. It is what could not have been done half a century ago. On reaching Portsmouth, the vessel underwent a regular inspection, and was found to have sustained very material damages, which, however, were not irreparable, and are in the course of being repaired. We conclude the accounts given of this remarkable exploit, by stating that Captain Coppin intends to commence operations on the *Vanguard*, one of Her Majesty's ironclads, accidentally sunk on the southern coast of Ireland. He has already, it is said, managed to introduce a couple of hawsers under the hull; and with some interest we shall await the result. To lift an ironclad war-vessel from the bottom of the sea, and float her to the nearest port, would surely be the perfection of maritime engineering. Possibly it may be done. We are no longer astonished at anything.

W. C.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XXI.—ETHEL FINDS A FRIEND.

'It was all one property once,' said Lady Maud, as she sat by Ethel's side in the open window of the school-room, while Ethel's pupil, Lady Alice, was busily engaged in copying a sketch. The window commanded across the park a view of Carbery, with its Elizabethan gables and vanes glinting back the sun. Lady Maud was fond of spending her spare hours in the society of the new governess, and she and Ethel were, in spite of the difference of their position, fast friends.

'It is seldom,' said Ethel Gray, 'that two such grand houses are so close together.'

'They belonged, as I said, to one owner,' returned Lady Maud; 'and the builder of Carbery was a De Vere and lived at High Tor, long ago. He was an ancestor of ours; but I don't know exactly how it was that the properties came to be divided. I do know how Sir Sykes came to be master of the Chase; and if you like, I will tell you the story. It is no secret. I wonder that none of the village gossips have been beforehand with me.'

'I always imagined Sir Sykes to be a relation of yours,' said Ethel, with another glance at the stately mansion, gleaming in the mellow sunshine.

'No more than you are, dear,' answered Lady Maud; 'and indeed he never could have expected to be the owner of that fine place, when he was a

boy. He was poor enough. His father, old Sir Harbottle, had been a sad spendthrift, and died abroad; and when Sir Sykes, then a captain of infantry, came back from India, he had nothing to inherit but the baronetcy. They are Yorkshire people, the Denzils, not Devonshire; but there was a connection by marriage between Sir Sykes and old Lord Harrogate, who had married Sir Harbottle's sister.

'This old Lord Harrogate was the master of Carbery Chase, and a kinsman of ours, and head of all the De Veres; but how, I cannot exactly tell you, for we titled people I suspect often remember as little of our pedigree as if our names were Jones or Robinson. I only know that he was a rich, lonely, furious-tempered old man, a widower without any children or nephews, and had quarrelled with all his relations, with Papa most of all, about some tiresome election business. They say lords are forbidden by law to meddle with elections, but they do meddle; and the Earl went on one side, and old Lord Harrogate, who was of different politics, on the other. The end of it was that Sir Sykes was sent for, and that Lord Harrogate made his will, giving every acre to his wife's nephew; just, as he said, that no De Vere should be the better for his death.'

'What was the oddest thing of all,' pursued Lady Maud, 'was that the old lord did not like Sir Sykes at all, and told him so, they say; but made him his heir exactly because he thought it would be gall and wormwood to his own kith and kin. And it was supposed that Lord Harrogate's anger and violent emotions brought on the fatal fit of apoplexy by which he was carried off. At anyrate he died suddenly only a few hours after the signing of the will; and that was how Sir Sykes became master of Carbery.'

'I should not think it could have made him very happy,' said Ethel thoughtfully.

'I am sure I don't know why it should not,' said the more practical Lady Maud. 'It was no fault of his, after all, that Lord Harrogate had the whim to will it away as he did; and Papa owed him no grudge for it; and we have always been on neighbourly terms, if not very intimate. But it did not make him happy. Sir Sykes,' she added laughingly, 'had, you must know, a most romantic love-affair in his youth, unlikely as such a thing seems to those who see him now.'

Ethel Gray asked, with more interest than before, if it were Sir Sykes Denzil's love-affair which had prevented his enjoying the material prosperity which was his.

'I have always thought so,' said Lady Maud confidently; 'though people ascribe his sad looks and retired life to a different cause. But there is no doubt that he was very much in love with a certain Miss De Vere, an exceedingly pretty girl, whom Papa and Mamma always speak of as Cousin Clare, and whose picture I will shew you this evening, if you like, in the Green Room. Cousin Clare was an orphan, with no money, and she lived in Papa's house when he was first married; and poor as she was, she was to be Lady Harrogate when the old lord died.'

'I thought your brother'—said Ethel wonderingly.

'O yes; it has come to us now, the title,' said Lady Maud, smiling. 'But Miss Clare De Vere, who was a distant cousin, came next in succession, and was to have the Barony, and be a peeress in her own right, when the old lord died. Harrogate is one of the oldest English titles, and goes, as they call it, to heirs-female; so that it was a standing joke that poor Miss De Vere would be a peeress without income enough to pay her milliner; only every one hoped she would marry well, since she was very lovely, as I told you. Now Sir Sykes was desperately in love with her; but the Earl did not approve of his suit, nor did Mamma, for he was badly off and in debt, and had been married before.'

'I did not know that. I noticed Lady Denzil's monument in the church only a month ago,' rejoined Ethel.

'That was the second wife,' said Lady Maud. 'Jasper and the girls were not her children. No. Sir Sykes married very young, when a subaltern in India, and there his wife died; and when he came home a widower, he had three children, to provide for, and scarcely any means at all. He was a handsome man—that I think one can see. But Cousin Clare did not like him; still she was of a gentle yielding nature, and when Sir Sykes became owner of Carbery, and a very good match indeed, and Papa thought Clare had better accept him, somehow she allowed herself to be talked into an engagement. Well, the baronet was very urgent, and he had got the Earl and Countess on his side; and poor Cousin Clare I'm afraid was not very strong-minded, so she promised to marry Sir Sykes; though the man she really cared for was a nearly cousin of hers and ours, Colonel Edward De Vere of the Quanis; and the wedding things were all got ready, and the lawyers had drawn the settlements; when, to the surprise of all, Cousin Clare was missing. She had eloped with her cousin Edward, and was married to him in Scotland.'

'Sir Sykes must have felt that very much?' said Ethel, looking across the park towards the distant mansion of Carbery.

'He did,' returned Lady Maud. 'But I don't pity him, because, as you shall hear, he behaved very ill. It was Papa who broke the news to him; and I have heard the Earl say that the passion of uncontrolled rage with which he received it was absolutely horrible. Some anger was natural of course; but he was more like a fiend than a man. He swore that he would be revenged; that he would never rest until he had found some means of stabbing Clare's heart, as she had stabbed his; and of making her bitterly rue the day when she had cast him off. He was, in fact, dreadfully violent, and it seemed the more shocking in a polite smooth-spoken man like him; but of course people excused him on account of the excitement of his feelings.'

'Men who are jilted do odd things, they say. In half a year after Clare's elopement, Sir Sykes married a Manchester heiress with a large fortune; and three years later the second Lady Denzil died at Tunbridge Wells; and soon after, her only child, a little girl of about three years old, died too. From that time it was that Sir Sykes's melancholy was supposed to date. It was supposed that he

never got over the loss of this baby daughter, and that was the odder, because he seemed the very last man to mourn always over a little child. It was not the loss of his wife; he cared very little for her. And he never seemed a devoted father to his surviving children. Yet since that tiny mite of a girl was buried, he never held up his head as he had been used to do.

'And Miss Clare, Miss De Vere?' asked Ethel, with a feminine interest in the heroine of the story.

'Ah! poor Cousin Clare!' said Lady Maud seriously: 'she suffered enough, poor thing, to expiate her breach of faith to Sir Sykes tenfold. Very, very short was her time of happy married life before—'

'I wish, Maud, please, you would look at this sketch for me, and help me with the foreground. I've made the figures too big, I'm afraid, and can't get in the rest of it,' said young Lady Alice, from amid her pencils and colour-boxes.

'I will; I'll come and try what I can make of it, as soon as I have told Miss Gray the rest of the story—the saddest part of it, I am sorry to say,' said good-natured Lady Maud. 'Sir Sykes's vengeance was realised, terribly realised, without his having to stir a finger in the matter, for little more than three years after Cousin Clare's marriage, her husband, whom she almost idolised, was brought home to the house a corpse. He had, like many other heroes both in romance and reality, been thrown from his horse in the hunting-field and killed on the spot.'

'The young Baroness Harrogate—I have already told you that Clare was heir-female to the title at the death of the old lord—was all but killed too, as I have heard, by the shock of her husband's death; but for the sake of her child, the only earthly consolation left to her, the poor thing bore up under her great affliction. Yet Papa said that when he went to see her, her mournful eyes quite haunted him for weeks and months afterwards, and that, beautiful as she still was, she looked but the ghost of her former self. Then, when the next summer came round—I hardly like to tell it!' said Lady Maud, as the tears rose thickly in her eyes.

'Do not tell me any more,' said Ethel gently, 'if it gives you pain.'

'No; I was foolish,' returned her friend, smiling; 'for what I am speaking of happened long, long ago, when you and I were in the nursery, and I have heard it related very often, though I never told it until to-day. Well, the young widow lived on in the house she had inhabited since the first days of her marriage, a pretty cottage beside the Thames, and there she dwelt alone with her child, a sweet little creature, a girl of three years of age, who promised to be nearly as beautiful as her beautiful mother. And then this last hope was snatched away.'

'Did the child die?' asked Ethel flutteringly.

'It was worse than that,' answered Lady Maud, whose lip trembled as she spoke. 'She had been with the child in the garden, which bordered the river. Little Helena—that was her name—was playing among the flowers when her mother was called away, and as she was entering the house, she heard a faint cry or scream, in what seemed to be the child's voice. She ran back to the garden, and to the grassy terrace where she had left her

young treasure; but the child was not to be seen. She called; but there was no answer. Trembling, she neared the water's edge, and there she saw the child's tiny straw-hat with its broad black ribbon, floating down the river; but of the body—for no one could doubt but that the poor little lamb had been drowned—there were no signs; and when aid was summoned and a search begun, it proved fruitless.'

'Was the poor little child never found then?' asked Ethel, more moved than she had expected to be by these details.

'Never found,' replied Lady Maud. 'No rewards, no entreaties availed, though men examined every creek and shoal of the river. No trace of the lost one was ever discovered except the little straw-hat. With that the miserable young mother never would part. On her own death-bed—and she died very soon after, utterly broken down by this double bereavement—it was the last object on which her dying eyes looked as her feeble fingers clung to it, that little hat of the child's. We talk lightly of broken hearts. And yet, such things can be. Poor Cousin Clare died of one. Hers was a sad, sad story.'

Both Lady Maud and Ethel were weeping now. The former was the first to dry her eyes.

'We are very silly,' she said, trying to smile, 'to cry in this way over an old history concerning people that we never, to our knowledge, saw; for though I was alive when Cousin Clare married, I don't remember her at all. I was too young for that. Only it struck me often that Sir Sykes Denzil's sadness may have more to do with the desertion of his betrothed bride and her brief career and early ending, than with the cause to which it is generally assigned. Don't you think so too?'

Ethel did think so; but she did not speak for a moment, and then she said: 'I pity Sir Sykes too. How bitterly his own cruel words, as to the revenge he threatened, must have come back to his memory when he heard the news of that great misfortune—of the child's being drowned.'

'Idle threats, dear! Perhaps he hardly remembered having spoken so foolishly in his excitement,' answered Lady Maud indifferently. 'It was after all about that time that he lost his own little daughter. Cousin Clare's title came to Papa, and our brother Harrogate bears it by courtesy, as you know. There was no property. The poor little child, had she lived, would have been Helena, Lady Harrogate.'

'The body was never found at all?' asked Ethel.

'Never found!' said Lady Maud.—'Now Alice, I'll help you with your drawing.' And the conversation ceased.

CHAPTER XXII.—ARCADES AMBO.

Hot, dusty, and conventionally empty as London now was, and stifling as was the confined air of St Nicholas Poultry, Mr Enoch Wilkins was in gay good-humour. He shewed it by the urbanity with which he was dismissing a shabby-genteel man of middle age, to whose remonstrances he had listened with a bland semi-serious patience unusual to him.

'Now, really, Mr Greeming, really we must have no more of this,' he said, shewing his white

front teeth in an affable smile. "Can't pay" and "Won't pay" are, I fancy, convertible phrases. The Loan Office cannot afford to do business on sentimental principles. And it's all very well to say that you only had in cash nine seven eleven, as consideration for your notes of hand, amounting to—let me see? And the solicitor glanced at a bundle of papers on the table.

'To twenty-eight pounds six and fourpence,' said the debtor piteously; 'two-thirds of which are for interest and commission.'

'But that,' pursued the solicitor, 'by no means affects the legal aspect of the case. The bill of sale over your furniture is none the less valid. I didn't quite catch your last remark.—Ah! to sell you up would be to you sheer ruin? Then, my good Mr Greening, I advise you to stave off the ruin by prompt payment, to escape the very heavy expenses to which you will otherwise be put. Good-day to you.—Now,' he added to his clerk, 'I will see this Mr Hold.' And as the impecunious Greening took his melancholy leave, the sunburnt countenance of Richard Hold became visible in the doorway.

'From abroad, I presume?' said Mr Wilkins affably, as his observant eye noted the seafaring aspect of his visitor and the bronze on his cheek, which might well have become a successful Australian digger, fresh with his dust and nuggets from the gold-fields.

'Well—I have been abroad; I have knocked about the world a goodish bit,' answered Hold slowly, 'but just latterly I've stayed ashore.'

Mr Wilkins picked up the office penknife and tapped the table with the buckhorn handle of it somewhat impatiently. He did not entertain quite so high an opinion of the swarthy stranger as before. The first glance had suggested damages in a running-down case at sea; the second, some claim for salvage; the third, an investment of savings earned, according to the picturesque phrase, 'where the gold grows.' But the solicitor knew life well enough to be aware that those who have knocked, in Hold's words, about the world, are rolling stones whereon seldom grows the moss of profit.

'What, Mr Hold, may be your business with me?' he asked curtly.

Richard Hold was not in the least nettled at this chilling reception. His dark roving eyes made their survey of the lawyer's surroundings, from the heavy silver inkstand to the prints on the walls, and then settled on the face of Mr Enoch Wilkins himself.

'That depends,' said Hold, with a lazy good-humour, as he leaned against the door-post nearest to him, 'on what you call business, skipper!'

Mr Wilkins frowned; but the words, sharp and peremptory, that rose to his lips, remained unspoken. His first idea had been that this was the saucy freak of an ill-conditioned sailor, and that a word to his clerk and a summons to the policeman on his beat hard by, would rid him of the intruder. But the man was quite sober. There must be some reason for his singular tone and bearing. Wherefore, when Mr Wilkins spoke again, it was urbanely enough: 'If I can be of use to you professionally, sir, you may command me; at least I shall be glad to hear what you have got to say. Perhaps you feel somewhat strange in a lawyer's office?'

'I haven't seen the inside of one since six years ago I was in trouble at Singapore about—never mind what!' returned Hold, checking his too communicative flow of words, and then added: 'Now I hail from Devonshire—Dartmoor way—Carbery Chase way, not to mince matters.'

Mr Wilkins started. 'Have you a message for me—from Sir Sykes, I mean?' he inquired, in an altered voice.

'No!' replied Hold, in a dubious tone, and coughing expressively behind his broad brown hand; 'not exactly that.'

The lawyer looked keenly at his visitor. Hold's bold eyes met his. The man's unabashed confident air was not lost on so shrewd an observer of human nature as was Enoch Wilkins. 'Take a chair, I beg, Mr Hold,' he said civilly; and Hold took a chair, placed it sideways, and seating himself upon it in a careless informal attitude, rested one elbow on the chair-back, and contemplated the lawyer with serene scrutiny.

'You come from Sir Sykes, however, although you do not bring a message?' asked Mr Wilkins.

'Take your affidavit of that, squire!' returned Hold, in an assured tone. 'We ought to be friends, you and I,' he added, with what was meant for an engaging smile, 'for we are both, I reckon, in the same boat.'

'In the same boat, hey?' repeated Mr Wilkins cautiously. 'How's that?'

'I mean,' said Hold, knitting his black brows, 'that we are both pretty much on the same lay—that we know a thing or two about a rich party that shall be nameless, and about certain old scores, and a certain young lady, and—Why should I do all the chat, master? Is this Greek to you, or do you catch my meaning?'

Mr Wilkins, whose eyes had opened very widely as he listened, here started as though he had been electrified. 'I understand you to imply,' he said smoothly, 'that our interests are identical!'

'Well, I guess they are,' responded Hold, in the blunt fashion that was natural to him. 'We both, I suppose, want as many of Sir Sykes Denzil's yellow coins as we can conjure out of his pocket; and both need no teaching to turn the screw pretty smartly when we see our way to it; eh, mister?'

Enoch Wilkins, gentleman, winced before this over-candid home-thrust. It is indeed one thing to be guilty of a particular act and another to hear it defined with unmanly plainness of speech. And he did not quite like the being bracketed, as to his motives and position, with a practical-looking fellow, such as he saw Hold to be. But to take offence was not his cue; so he laughed softly, as at the sallies of some rough humorist, and rattled his watch-guard to aid fro, as he warily made answer: 'All men, I believe, are supposed to take care of Number One. I do not profess to be a bit more disinterested than my neighbours, and if I did, you are too wide awake to believe me.'

'Right you are!' responded Richard with a mollified grin and an amicable snap of the ends of his hard fingers. 'I never cruised in company with a philanthropist (meaning probably a philanthropist) but once, and he made off with my kit and gold-dust while I was taking my turn down shaft at Flathead Creek, in California there. My notion is that there are pickings for both. Why

should we two fall out so long as Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet, is good for this kind of thing? And the ruffian imitated, in expressive pantomime, the action of squeezing a sponge.

Again the lawyer laughed. 'No need,' he said with well-feigned admiration for the other's astuteness, 'to send your wits to the whetstone, Mr—or perhaps I should say Captain—Hold.'

'Well, I don't dislike the handle to my name; and I've a fairish right to it, since I've had my own caddy and my own quarter-deck,' rejoined Hold boastfully. 'And now, squire, I'd like to hear your views a little more explicit out than I have had the pleasure.'

It was the attorney's turn to cough now, as he replied, still swaying his watch-guard to and fro: 'There you push me, my good sir, into a corner. Every profession has its point of honour, you know; and we lawyers are shy of talking over the affairs of an absent client unless'—

'Client, you call him, do you?' broke in Hold. 'Maybe you're correct there, since you've brought the Bart. to throw Pounce and Pontifex overboard, and make you first-officer over his tenants; but he wasn't a client before yesterday.'

The astonishment written in Mr Wilkins's face was very genuine. Of all the extraordinary confidants whom Sir Sykes could have selected, surely this coarse fierce adventurer was the most unlikely. And yet how, save from Sir Sykes himself, could the fellow have acquired his knowledge of the truth?

'I was not prepared'—stammered out the lawyer.

'Not prepared,' interrupted Hold coolly, 'to find a rough diamond like yours to command, so deep in the Bart's little secrets. Perhaps not. Mind ye, I don't want to quarrel. Live and let live. But it's good sometimes to fire a shotted gun adhart a stranger's bows, d'ye see?'

'You and Sir Sykes are old acquaintances?' said the lawyer, feeling his way.

'Pretty well for that. Years too have gone by a few since you and he first came within hailing distance,' replied Hold with assumed carelessness.

'We were younger men, that's certain,' returned the lawyer with a jolly laugh and a twinkling eye. That anybody should try to extract from him—from him, Enoch Wilkins, information that he desired to keep to himself—to pump him, in homely phraseology, seemed to the attorney of St Nicholas Poultry, in the light of an exquisitely subtle joke. Hold, in spite of his confidence in his own shrewdness, began to entertain vague doubts as to whether in a fair field he was quite a match for the London solicitor. Fortune, however, had dealt him a handful of court-cards, and he proceeded to improve the occasion.

'Now, squire,' said Hold impressively, and laying one brawny hand, as if to enforce the argument, on the table as he spoke, 'I could, if I chose, clap a match to the powder-magazine and blow the whole concern sky-high. Suppose I weren't well used among ye? Suppose I began to meet cold looks and buttoned-up pockets? What easier than to make a clean breast of what is no longer pays to keep secret, stand the consequences—I've stood worse on the Antipodes side of the world—and get another sniff of blue water. That would spoil your market, squire!'

Mr Wilkins muttered something about edge-

tools; but his seafaring guest answered the remark by a short laugh of scorn. 'You know a thing or two,' he said incisively; 'so do I. Are we or are we not to act in concert? If not, up with your colours and fire a broadside. Anyhow, friend or enemy, I'll thank you to speak out.'

All Mr Wilkins's liveliness vanished in an instant, and he seemed strongly and soberly in earnest as he said: 'I will speak out, as you call it. I should very much prefer to be on good terms with you. I should like us, as far as we prudently can, to co-operate. But you have not as yet told me what you would have me do.'

'I'll tell you,' said Hold confidentially, edging his chair nearer to the lawyer's. 'When you go down to Carbery— You mean to go, don't you?' he added abruptly.

'Certainly,' said the lawyer, touching a spring in the table by which he sat, and producing from a concealed drawer, that flew open at his touch, a letter, which he unfolded and handed to his visitor. 'You know so much, captain, that I need not keep back this from you. It is from Sir Sykes, as you see. The contents are probably not strange to you.'

'Not likely,' returned the seaman, throwing his eyes, with ill-dissembled eagerness, on the letter. 'He asks you to come down then, and names an early day. The rents will be passing through your hands before long, Mister. Taint that, though, I want to speak of. You'll find when you get to the Chase, a young lady there.'

'I understood that Sir Sykes had two daughters,' said the attorney innocently.

'He had three, if you come to that,' was Hold's rough answer. 'But this is no daughter. Maybe she'll be a daughter-in-law, some fine day.'

'Oho!' said Mr Wilkins, arching his eyebrows. 'Young lady on a visit, I presume?'

'On a very long visit,' answered Hold. 'A ward she is of the Bart, orphan daughter of an old Indian brother-officer. Name of Willis; Christian name Ruth.'

'Ruth!' Trained and practised as the sharp London man of business was in the incessant struggle of wits and jarring interests, he could not repress the exclamation. 'Bless me—Ruth!' he added breathlessly, and grew red and pale by turns. There seemed to be some magic in the sound of that apparently simple name which affected those who heard it.

'Name of Willis; Christian name Ruth,' repeated Hold. 'Like one of themselves she is now. Shouldn't wonder if she were to change her name, first to Mrs Captain Denzil, afterwards to Lady Denzil when Sir Jasper that will be comes into title and property. You've known Sir Jasper that will be, squire; you've had dealings with him. Now, mark me! The sooner that young dandy makes up his mind to place a gold ring on Miss Ruth's pretty finger, the better for him and for the Bart, and for you too Mr Wilkins. "A nod's as good as a wink"—you know the rest of the proverb.' And throwing on the table a card, on which were legibly pencilled the words 'CAPTAIN HOLD. Inquire at Plinger's Boarding-house,' and promising, ominously, to see Mr Wilkins again, in London or at Carbery, the seaman took his leave.

Left alone, the lawyer's features relaxed into a smile of satisfaction. 'A cleverish fellow and vain

of his cleverness, this Hold, but very communicative. It would surprise you, my good captain, if you knew how very much you have been kind enough to tell me, during our late interview.'

NEW EXPLOSIVES.

AT the head of the list of deadly explosives must of course be placed gunpowder, which is so well known that nothing needs to be said regarding it. Interest attaches to recent inventions, still as it were in their infancy. The most important of these new explosives is gun-cotton, a substance of most peculiar nature and properties. It is prepared by immersing cotton-waste (previously rendered chemically clean) in a mixture of nitric and sulphuric acid—the latter acid merely acting as a mechanical aid to the former. The cotton is afterwards thoroughly washed, reduced to a pulp, and finally dried and compressed into slabs or discs; the last operation being the only process throughout its manufacture which is attended with danger. Even where the greatest precautions are taken, the constant handling of a dangerous substance with impunity will sooner or later lead to carelessness, or at anyrate to forgetfulness of its terrible character. The disastrous explosion some years ago at the large gun-cotton works at Stowmarket, where the most stringent rules for the common safety were in force, is an illustration of this. It is needless to dwell upon the impossibility of tracing the immediate cause of such a fatality—the guilty hand being of course one of the first to suffer the dread penalty.

It is a curious peculiarity of gun-cotton that the intensity of its action depends upon the manner in which it is ignited. A smouldering spark will induce it to smoulder also; a flame will cause it to go off in a feeble puff; but a detonating fuse will, as it were, enrage it, causing it to explode with a force ten times that of gunpowder. Gun-cotton is not adapted for the rifle, where extreme uniformity of combustion is one of the conditions of accurate shooting; but it can be used for sporting purposes, provided that the risk of frictional ignition in ramming home be obviated by the use of a breech-loading gun. Its force can, by dilution with pure cotton or other inert substance, be brought more to the level of gunpowder, but only at the sacrifice of those good qualities, such as freedom from smoke and reduction of fouling, which really constitute the chief advantages of its use. It is, we believe, used exclusively for charging torpedoes; and a suggestion has been thrown out that it might also be used with great advantage in savage warfare for the destruction of palisades and defences of a similar kind, in dense jungle impenetrable by artillery.

The next explosive in order of usefulness is nitro-glycerine, to make which, ordinary glycerine is acted upon (as in the case of gun-cotton) with nitric and sulphuric acid. It has the appearance of a yellow oil, insoluble in, and heavier than water. The many accidents which have occurred from its use seem to be due to some decomposing quality which it possesses, and which at present

is little understood. Unlike gunpowder, it burns harmlessly away when a flame is applied to it; but when heated to the temperature of boiling water, its explosive force is most violent. Many means have been suggested for rendering it less liable to spontaneous explosion, for in its crude state it cannot be stored away with any security for its good behaviour. The most successful plan is to mix it with a particular kind of porous earth, under which transformation it is known as 'dynamite.' On taking this solid form, it will bear comparatively rough usage, while its violent character is in no way diminished. Our readers will perhaps remember that dynamite was the agent used in that terrible explosion at Bremerhafen, which cost so many lives and such destruction of property. With fiendish ingenuity it was placed in a case together with a clockwork apparatus calculated to explode a fuse in a given time; the object of the crime being to secure the money for which the steamer that was to carry the terrible burden had been insured. By an error of calculation the explosion happened, with the most awful consequences, before the package had been removed from the quay. The practicability of employing dynamite under water has lately been demonstrated in a very shameful manner by a wholesale destruction of fish by its aid. The righteous indignation of all true anglers will most probably find vent in stopping without delay such a barbarous practice. Lithofracteur is the name of another preparation of nitro-glycerine, so like dynamite in its general properties that we need not further allude to it.

A totally different class of explosives from those which we have previously considered, are the fulminates of the different metals. They are chiefly used diluted with some other matter (such as ordinary gunpowder) for the priming of percussion caps, and for the detonating fuses which play so important a part in the firing of mines, &c. The manner of accomplishing this by the ignition of an electric fuse is, in its neatness and freedom from danger, a great contrast to the old system, where the operator had to light a slow-match, and take to his heels until distance had lent more enchantment to his position. Undiluted, the fulminates are almost useless, for the touch of a hair is sometimes sufficient to explode them; and when fired, their power is of the most terrible character. There are many other compounds which, on account of their uncontrollable nature, are of no practical value, and are never prepared except for purposes of experiment.

It will perhaps now be understood that although there is a family likeness between the various mixtures which we have mentioned, their individual behaviour is most unlike. It therefore becomes necessary in dealing with any one of them to consider first for what particular use it is required. It is possible, for instance, to charge a shell with an explosive which has the power of reducing it to tiny fragments; a result which would of course almost nullify its effect. It is sometimes perhaps necessary to throw dust in the eyes of an enemy, but certainly not in a sense so literal as this. Again, many compounds would cause a shell to burst with the concussion it receives when blown from the gun; and thus prove more destructive to friends than foes. Such an accident is next to impossible with either gunpowder or cotton. The

latter is employed with very startling results in combination with water in the so-called water-shells. A very small charge of compressed gun-cotton is placed in a shell, the remaining space being filled with water. In practice it is found that a shell so charged explodes into eight times as many fragments as it will when filled with gunpowder in the ordinary way. The effects of gun-cotton are different from those of powder, in that it exerts a sudden splitting power. The blasting of rocks, for instance, is often commenced with the former, which splits the mineral into cracks and fissures. These cracks are afterwards filled with powder, which detaches huge masses from their beds with a lifting power of which gun-cotton alone, is incapable.

Many plans have at various times been proposed to render explosives harmless during manufacture and transport. The suggestion of mixing pulverised glass with gunpowder is effective in separating mechanically the grains, and so preventing the initial flash from penetrating beyond the particular ones submitted to inflammation. In consequence, probably, of the exposure entailed in the mixing as well as during the subsequent process of sifting out the glass before the powder can be used, the process has not attained any practical importance. Gun-cotton, on the other hand, by being saturated with water is rendered quite inert; the subsequent process of removing the excess of moisture being free from danger. Special conditions are necessary to its explosion in a damp state, conditions not easily brought about by mere accident. Dr Sprengle has suggested several powerful explosives which claim the advantage of safety, for their constituents are harmless in themselves, and need not be blended until they are actually required for use. Concerning Schultz's wool-powder we may perhaps have a few words to say in a future paper.

Before quitting our subject it will be in some measure a relief to reflect that the things of which we have spoken are not wholly dedicated to bloodshed. Besides their use in our mines and quarries, whereby an incalculable amount of manual labour is dispensed with, many of them are in constant requisition for the demolition of old structures, such as the piers of bridges, and for the removal of submarine structures of all kinds. In the excavations for the Suez Canal, gunpowder was largely used; and many other engineering schemes owe their ready accomplishment to the employment of a like agent. The greatest recorded undertaking of the kind is the destruction in 1876 of the Hellgate rocks, which formed such a dangerous obstruction to navigation in East River, New York. No less than sixty thousand pounds of dynamite were consumed on this occasion, the watery field of operation covering about three acres. Some years had been previously employed in making the necessary excavations for the reception of the cartridges, which were eventually fired by an electric battery of one thousand cells. The results gained quite surpassed the most sanguine expectations of the engineers engaged, and other obstructions in neighbouring rivers are shortly to receive similar treatment. Some of the good people of New York were terribly agitated at the thought even of the contemplated scheme, and left the city with the firm conviction that they would return only to find it in ruins. But the

fair city still exists unharmed—with the advantage of a much-improved tideway—and the good folk alluded to are forced to acknowledge that their prognostications of evil have ended in smoke.

MR ASLATT'S WARD.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

It was a strange day that followed. After much deliberation and a hard struggle with her shrinking from such a proceeding, Rose resolved to follow my advice, and make her confession to Mr Aslatt, trusting to obtain his forbearance towards the chief delinquent. She went to him in his library soon after breakfast, from which meal she had absented herself on the plea of a headache, which was no mere excuse, but the natural result of her violent weeping during the preceding night.

What passed at that interview I never knew. They were together for more than an hour. At the end of that time I heard Rose come out of the library and go slowly up-stairs. I followed her after a few minutes, thinking she might need me; but as I ascended the stairs I heard her hastily lock her door, as a security against intrusion. Shortly afterwards, as I stood at the window, I saw Mr Aslatt leave the house and cross the park in the direction in which the school-house lay. Several hours passed. Mr Aslatt did not return, and Rose's door continued closed against me. I was beginning to feel anxious, when I received a note from Mr Aslatt, brought to the house by one of the school children, in which he briefly informed me that he was obliged to make a hasty journey to London, and would not be home till night.

I saw nothing of Rose until the dinner-hour arrived, when we sat down to table together. She strove hard to appear as usual during the meal. Her dress manifested careful arrangement, and though her cheeks were almost as pale as the white robe she wore, she looked strikingly beautiful. As long as the servant remained in the room she talked incessantly, and even laughed; but when there was no longer need to keep up an appearance of cheerfulness, her manner changed. The troubled look returned, and she grew painfully restless. The evening was passed by her in wandering from room to room, unable to settle to any occupation. Sometimes she took up a book, but only to throw it aside in impatience the next moment and go to a window, to watch with growing anxiety for Mr Aslatt's return.

At last, when her endurance had been tried to the utmost, he came. I was grieved to see the weary saddened look his face wore when he came into the room where we both were. He seemed to have grown ten years older in one day. Rose became paler than ever as he entered. She did not move to meet him, but stood still, gazing at him with an eager questioning glance. As he approached her, I slipped out of the room, for I was sure they would wish to be alone.

The next day Mr Aslatt took me into his confidence, and freely discussed with me the difficult position in which he found himself placed in regard to Rose. Knowing her vehement attach-

ment to Mr Hammond, and having had a proof of the strength of her determination to cling to him, he shrank from paining her, and perhaps driving her to an undesirable course of action by refusing his consent to their marriage; the more so that he had made inquiries, and discovered that the assertion, which Rose so repeatedly made, namely that her lover was by birth a gentleman, was quite correct. Mr Aslatt had had some conversation with a solicitor, an elderly man, who was acquainted with Mr Hammond's family history, and who spoke of him as a singularly unfortunate young man. His father had been a spendthrift man of pleasure, who had squandered away all his property, and been forced to sell the family estate whilst his son—whose mother had died in giving him birth—was yet a child. The self-ruined man had then pursued a disgraceful career of gambling, which had terminated in a premature death. Neglected and uncared for during his father's lifetime, the boy was in a still more deplorable situation after his decease, and would have fared ill, if the solicitor who had managed his father's affairs, hearing of his desolate condition, had not exerted himself to procure the lad's admission into an orphan asylum. Here he had received a tolerable education; and at the close of his term of schooling a place had been found for him as clerk in a merchant's office. But the occupation had not been to his taste, and at the end of a twelvemonth he took offence at some trivial occurrence, and threw up his situation.

The gentleman who had told Mr Aslatt thus much was unable to say how Mr Hammond had supported himself during the interval that had elapsed from the time of his leaving the merchant's office to the day when he sought the post of village schoolmaster; but he believed he had resided abroad during most of the time. He had brought Mr Aslatt credentials as to his respectability and qualifications from the hand of a schoolmaster living in the north of England. Pleased with the young man's appearance and bearing, Mr Aslatt had rather hastily concluded an engagement with him, and had not deemed it necessary to make very particular inquiries as to his antecedents. Now that he was anxious to learn more of the young man's previous history, he found, to his disappointment, that the schoolmaster who had acted as referee had died but a few weeks before.

It may readily be imagined that Mr Aslatt was not satisfied with the information he had gleaned. There was a period of Mr Hammond's life of which he knew nothing except that, from his own explanation, he had supported himself during those years by giving English lessons in schools and families in the neighbourhood of Berlin. Mr Aslatt felt that he had no reasonable ground for doubting the truth of the young man's statement, yet in spite of his desire to be perfectly just, he could not divest his mind of uncomfortable suspicions. Yet there was nothing in the facts which he had learned which he could urge as a reason why Rose should consent to give up all idea of marrying Mr Hammond. The story of his unfortunate childhood and youth would but excite her warmest pity, and incline her to cling to him with greater devotion. Mr Aslatt was much perplexed how to act. He confessed to me—little guessing how well I understood his words, having divined his heart's

secret—that the thought of giving his ward to Mr Hammond was inexpressibly painful to him, for of late he had conceived an inexplicable aversion to the young man, and a feeling of distrust, which had been strengthened by the discovery of the censurable manner in which Mr Hammond had gained paramount influence over Rose. Yet he shrank from the thought of blighting the girl's whole life, as she had passionately declared that he would, if he prevented her marrying the man she loved.

I felt much for Mr Aslatt in the painful position in which he was placed, and longed to help him, but knew not how. After some deliberation, however, we decided upon a course of action which seemed to us both the best possible under the circumstances. Without absolutely opposing the union, Mr Aslatt determined to withhold his formal consent for the space of twelve months, during which time the young people should be allowed to meet at stated intervals, if they would promise to abstain from all clandestine proceedings. At the expiration of the year, if nothing had transpired to shake Mr Aslatt's confidence in the young schoolmaster, he pledged his word to consent to his marriage with Rose, and to do all in his power to promote their happiness. Meanwhile he proposed to find Mr Hammond some employment more in keeping with the hopes he cherished than the post he had previously held. It seemed to me that this was better treatment than the young man deserved. But it was love for Rose that prompted the arrangement, and a generous desire on her guardian's part to shield her from suffering even at the cost of bitter pain to himself.

Before our discussion terminated, Mr Aslatt confided to me the facts concerning Rose's parentage, which I have already related. He had never yet told them to her, he said, fearing she would over-estimate her obligation to him, which after all was merely imaginary, for whatever kindness he had shewn her had been more than compensated for by the happiness her companionship had brought him. In earlier days, when she questioned him as to her parentage, he had told her that at some future time she should know all; but of late she had made no inquiries, and he had been reluctant to say anything which might disturb their pleasant relations.

I told him that I thought she ought to know the history of her early days.

'Do you think so?' he said. 'But I could not tell her now. It would seem as if I were trying to coerce her into acquiescence to my wishes by revealing claims to her gratitude. No, no; I cannot tell her now.' After a while he added: 'I do not believe I shall ever tell her myself, and yet she may ask me any day, and perhaps I ought not to keep her in ignorance. If ever you think it well to tell her what I have told you, Miss Bygrave, you have my permission to do so, but not at present. And pray, never let her imagine that I have great claims upon her gratitude.'

To make a long story short; the proposed arrangement was carried out. Rose humbly and thankfully agreed to wait a year for her guardian's formal consent; and Mr Hammond made no objection, though it must have been sorely against his will. Mr Aslatt succeeded in obtaining a position in Somerset House for the young man, who was

therefore obliged to reside in London; though every fortnight he paid us a visit, and stayed from Saturday evening till Monday morning at the Hall. Rose always seemed to look forward with such eagerness to these fortnightly visits that it must have been very painful for Mr Aslatt to witness the delight she took in Mr Hammond's society. But however bitter his feelings were, he carefully concealed them, and ever treated the young man with the utmost consideration and kindness. His manner to Rose betrayed nought save the tenderness of a parent; and she on her part no longer indulged in fits of petulance, but was gentle, subdued, and affectionate in her intercourse with him. Indeed she had changed from a wilful child to a thoughtful woman, since the memorable night when I had saved her from committing a rash act. Mr Hammond's demeanour also had improved. He no longer bore himself haughtily, but strove by a humble and becoming deportment to reinstate himself in Mr Aslatt's good opinion.

As time passed on I came to entertain for him a kinder feeling, though I could not anticipate with any pleasure the expiration of the probationary period which rapidly drew nigh. Winter came and went; spring returned to gladden the land; the summer months succeeded, and it wanted but a few weeks to the day Rose was so eagerly expecting. Mr Hammond was staying for a few days at the Hall, and one lovely afternoon Rose proposed that we should ride over to Ashdene and spend a few hours in wandering amongst the ruins. We all agreed to the proposal, and were soon ready to start. On our way thither, Rose and Mr Hammond took the lead, and Mr Aslatt and I followed a few paces behind. It was becoming more and more difficult for Mr Aslatt to maintain a cheerful demeanour. In Rose's presence, he always made the effort, but out of her sight he frequently fell into a gloomy mood. He scarcely made a remark during our ride to Ashdene; and after a few attempts to draw him into conversation, I left him to himself. Arrived at Ashdene, we left our horses at the inn, and proceeded to the ruined Priory. Rose was as gay as a bird that afternoon; her laugh rang through the deserted corridors as she flitted from one part of the ruins to another, followed by Mr Hammond.

I wandered away by myself, feeling sure that Mr Aslatt would not require my company, and indeed would feel more at ease if left alone. After a while I found myself within the four walls inclosing what had once been the chapter-house. Glancing through a window much mutilated, and rendered beautiful by the ivy which festooned its broken shafts and crumbling arches, I perceived Rose and her lover sauntering over the green turf, a few yards from the wall within which I stood. At the same moment I became aware that I was not the only one observing them. Close to where I stood, but on the other side of the wall, sheltered from view on all sides save the one which I commanded, by the angle of a projecting doorway, stood a woman. Her tall gaunt figure was clad in a silk dress which had once been black, but was now rusty with age, and frayed and torn with frequent wear. A bonnet of the same hue and equally shabby, rested at the back of her head, and did not conceal the thick black hair which fell loosely over her fore-

head. But I scarcely noted her apparel at first, so much was I attracted by her strange weird face. She was very pale, but her eyes were intensely bright with a scorching burning brilliancy, which suggested the possibility of madness. They were gleaming with hatred as I looked at her, for there was no mistaking the expression of her white haggard countenance, even if the angry tone in which she muttered to herself words that I could not catch, and the clenched fist which she was shaking after the retreating figures, had not revealed her mind. As I watched her in considerable amazement and fear, she suddenly turned and beheld me. For a few moments she returned my gaze defiantly, as if questioning my right to watch her. Then moved by a sudden impulse, she advanced with rapid strides to the window at which I stood, and laying her hand on mine as it rested on the sill, demanded in a hoarse voice: 'Who is the young lady walking with that man?' pointing as she spoke to the distant pair.

'I cannot answer that question,' I replied, 'unless you tell me what reason you have for asking it.'

'What reason?' she repeated. 'The most powerful of all reasons. But tell me only this: does she think to marry him? That at least I have a right to know. Ah! you do not answer. You cannot deny it: I can read the truth in your face. And so he intends to marry that pretty fair-haired girl, does he? Ha, ha, ha!' And she laughed a wild laugh, which filled me with horror as I heard it.

'Who are you?' I exclaimed. 'And what do you mean by such words?'

'Who am I?' she reiterated. 'You shall know soon. I will tell you all, but not now. He must be by, or my revenge will not be complete. But there is no time to lose.' So saying, she walked hastily away, in spite of my efforts to detain her, and quickly disappeared round the corner of the chapter-house. In great consternation, I also quitted the spot and hastened in search of my companions. I found them at no great distance; Mr Aslatt, Rose, and Mr Hammond seated on some stones a little way beyond the Priory, chatting together and looking out for me.

'Where have you been?' exclaimed Rose as I approached. 'We were beginning to fear you were lost.'

'I think it is about time for us to return home,' said Mr Aslatt, as he looked at his watch.

'I am quite ready,' I replied; for I felt such dread of the strange woman making her appearance, that I longed to get away from the place.

'Oh, do not let us go yet!' exclaimed Rose; 'it is so delightful here.' As she spoke she took off her hat, and the light evening breeze played at will amongst her sunny tresses. Her face was radiant with happiness, as all unsuspecting of coming woo she sat there; when suddenly a hand was laid on her arm, and a low hoarse voice startled us all with the words: 'That man by your side is a liar, and a traitor, fair lady!'

It was the woman I had already seen. She had come through the ruin behind us, and managed to approach unseen as we sat with our faces turned in another direction. Had some explosive missile been suddenly thrown into our midst it could not have produced greater consternation than did these words. For a moment we were all speechless from

bewilderment. But the next, Rose recovered herself, and the blood rushed in an angry torrent to her face, as shaking off the woman's hand, she exclaimed indignantly: 'How dare you? What right have you to say such words?'

'The right of one who knows him far better than you can—for he is my husband!'

'It is false!' broke from Rose's quivering lips, as she turned appealingly to Mr Hammond; but alas! his pallid face betrayed an agitation which seemed to confirm the woman's statement.

'This woman is mad,' he said, striving hard to maintain his composure.

But Rose heeded not his words. She knew intuitively that the worst was true. Mr Aslatt was at her side in a moment, assuring her, as he tenderly supported her fainting form, that she need not fear, for the woman's story should not be believed without full proof. But she made no reply; indeed I doubt whether she heard what he said, for Nature kindly came to her relief, and she sank into unconsciousness.

LUNDY ISLAND.

At the mouth of the Bristol Channel, off the pleasant western English shore, fighting as it were with the long white waves of the Atlantic, and with its lighthouse warning the mariner to give it ample range, stands the lonely little island of Lundy, between Devon on the south and the coast of Wales on the north; while from the island's granite cliffs, looking towards the western horizon, stretches the open Atlantic. It is a very little place; only three and a half miles in length by an average of one half mile in width, and of an extreme altitude of a trifle over five hundred feet. The top is an undulating table-land; the sides slope down green with ferns, and in the blossoming-time bright with flowers, to rocks, on the eastern side of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet in height; while to the west the cliffs, rich with orange, yellow, and gray lichens, are tumbled in strange confusion, and present a scene of wild and precipitous grandeur. Of the three thousand acres of which the island consists, about five hundred are under cultivation, and produce turnips and cereal crops, besides grass; the remainder is gorse and heather, which, however, is now also in course of being brought into cultivation. Of farm-produce Lundy also rears poultry, sheep, and cattle.

In 1877, the population consisted of between forty and fifty individuals, consisting of the proprietor and his family and household, a farmer and a dozen farm-labourers, three lighthouse-men, and two signal-station-men; besides which the islet boasts of a doctor and a clergyman—though not of a church. The owner Mr W. H. Hearen purchased the property in 1834, and has since, for the most part, resided on his sea-girl rock.

Solitary and little known as Lundy now is, it was once a place of considerable importance. Of its earliest history indeed nothing is ascertained; even its name cannot be exactly traced, and the suggestion that would derive it from the Norse

has not met with entire acceptance. Some years since a discovery was made on the island which would have been of more than local interest had the occurrence been duly reported to any of the scientific societies, and thoroughly investigated. Some workmen in digging a foundation for a wall, exhumed two skeletons, which excited wonder from the unusual size of the bones, and from the curious manner of their interment. The larger skeleton, after careful (but unscientific) measurement, was found to be eight feet three inches in height; while the other, though smaller, was yet of no ordinary stature. It has been thought that probably some mistake has been made through want of skill in the measurements; these interesting relics were inclosed in stone slabs, according to a primitive fashion.

The time when Lundy comes clearly in view is of much later date. The noble House of Montmorency (or De Marisco, as the English branch of the family was called) was in earliest recorded possession of the island. The De Mariscos seem to have been a restless turbulent set, a weariness and a grief to their liege lords, two of whom, namely Henry II. and John, respectively made and confirmed a grant of the island as forfeited to the crown (for the misdeemeanors of the De Mariscos of their days) to the Knights Templar. The Knights, however, never had it actually in their hands—the De Mariscos proving too wily or too strong for ejection. Be this as it may, it is recorded that a Sir William de Marisco, of sad piratical proclivities and practice, after a fruitless attempt to murder his sovereign Henry III., retired to his stronghold of Lundy, and there flourished until he was captured by the king's forces, and summarily put to death. The ruins of his castle at Lundy still bear his name, and perched on the cliff top, commanding a wide sea and coast view, and overlooking the roadstead and single good landing-place of the island, shew what a post of vantage he must have held. Cottages nestle now for shelter from the wild winter winds, within the thick walls of the old keep; and the little gray beach below, shut in by towering precipice and pinnacled rock, tells no tale of former times.

When the troublous days of difference between Charles I. and his parliament darkened the land, Lundy held out stoutly for the king; and when at length, in the fainting of the king's fortunes, Thomas Bushell the governor writes for permission to surrender it quietly, he concludes his letter with words worthy of remembrance, however obscure the scene and the actor: 'But if otherwise your Majesty shall require my longer stay here, be confident, Sir, I shall sacrifice both life and fortune before the loyalty of your obedient servant, THOMAS BUSHELL.' Charles replied from Newcastle, the shadow of his fate already upon him: 'BUSHELL—We have perused your letter, in which we find thy care to answer thy trust we first reposed in thee. Now, since the place is incon-

siderable in itself. . . we do hereby give you leave to use your discretion in it, with this caution, that you do take example from ourselves, and be not over-credulous of vain promises, which hath made us great only in our sufferings, and will not discharge our debts.'

In subsequent times the island seems to have relapsed into its old wild piratical courses. Complaints many and bitter are made against it. As before it had been a refuge for outcasts, so now it became a harbour for privateers, 'who put terror into all vessels;' 'much shooting' being heard there also on occasion. For a time it falls into the hands of the French, and is generally a terrible thorn in the sides of the prosperous west country. The next name, however, which has left any local memorial is that of Thomas Benson, a gentleman of North Devon, who renting the island from Lord Gower, made free use of it for his smuggling ventures. A large cave under the castle, where he is said to have stored his contraband goods, is still called 'Benson's Cave,' and must have afforded ample room for many a 'run cargo.' To Lundy too he exported such convicts as he was under contract with government to convey to America, and employed them in building walls, saying it 'was all as well as elsewhere, seeing it was out of England.' Finally, however, he ceased to enjoy the prosperity of the wicked, and being discovered in a nefarious scheme to rob the insurance offices, he fled to Portugal, where he died. Since then, excepting for some free fighting between Welsh and Irish, the island has had little to recall its stormier days, and appears to have faded out of the public memory—so completely, that the 'taxed British hoof,' to use Emerson's bland expression, leaves no impress on its soil, and the civilised miseries of rates are unknown; though whether the omission is due to a lingering remnant of its old sovereignty, or to its present insignificance, we know not.

In its geological aspect, Lundy seems to be allied to Devonshire, consisting chiefly of granite and slate. Both granite and slate are alike intersected by numerous dikes, varying from one to thirty feet in width, running from east to west, and described as 'belonging to a grand system of intrusive greenstone.'

Some years ago the granite was worked by a Company, who brought stone-cutters from Scotland, and opened quarries at considerable expense; but the affair is said to have been ill-managed, and the works were closed at a loss. Copper has been found at the junction of the slate and granite at the south end; but the island has been so shaken here and in various other parts by some terrible convulsion of nature, that it is considered improbable that any lode could be profitably followed up. The effects of this convulsion are peculiarly manifested on the western side, between the 'Quarter' and 'Half-way' walls. Many rents are visible in the solid rock. One large cleft, fern-fringed and flower-

bedecked, stands up like a perpendicular wall of some fifty feet on the upper side; the lower, broken and split, has slipped away from it in tumbled rock and treacherous crevice. Below this again is a second, deeper opening. At one end is a narrow entrance, leading by a steep scrambling descent into the yawning chasm. A few green things grow in the chinks and crucks, and sparse tufts of long grass mark the footway. The walls, a little apart, and sloping slightly outwards, are clean cut as by some giant's sword. The air is chill out of the sunshine, and the strip of sky overhead looks blue and clear between its two dark boundaries. Among the natural curiosities of the island is a mass of granite resembling a human head, with lineaments so perfect, that it is difficult to believe that Art has not supplemented Nature in its formation. The grave face looking seawards, like a watching knight (The Knight Templar as it is called), has probably been the work of many centuries of subtle influences, disintegration by wind and weather—as in the case of the 'Old Man of Hoy,' which looks out on the Pentland Firth—being the chief. The soil of the island is principally of a black peaty nature, with in parts a substratum of clay. And that the land has been anciently extensively cultivated is shown by traces of the plough where now there is only wild pasturage. Ruins of round towers (for what purposes designed is unknown), and of humble dwelling-places, are also visible.

The flora of Lundy is extremely interesting, but has never been exhaustively treated. Masses of broom and gorse (*Ulex Europæus*) glow like living lights on the 'sidelands' in the spring-time; or in early autumn, the latter's dwarf relative (*Ulex nanus*) weaves, with heath and heather, carpets gorgeous beyond those of Eastern looms. Thrift (*Armeria vulgaris*) lies in breadths of pinky bloom, and blue-bells climb like a tender mist along the valleys and slopes. Regal foxgloves tower not only over their own kindred, but above the usual stature of man; and the *Osmunda regalis*, crowned among ferns, waves its lovely fronds in the pure sea-breeze. Thickets of honeysuckle make the sunshine a fragrance; and the beautiful bladder campion hangs like snow-vreaths from the rocks.

With vegetation so luxuriant in for the most part a mild equable temperature, the insect world is, as would be supposed, a numerous one. The beetle tribe alone, however, has been fully examined. Mr Wollaston, who visited the island many years ago (and is still remembered there as 'the beetle-catcher'), remarks on the richness of this order of insects and the rarity of the specimens he found there. He also mentions the curious fact, which, however, has been since modified, that the coleopterous fauna of Lundy is quite dissimilar to that of Devonshire, its nearest neighbour, resembling much in character that of Wales. Mr J. B. Chanter of Barnstaple (to whose comprehensive monograph on Lundy we have been indebted for this paper) furnishes some notes regarding certain rare insects found on the island.

The ornithological fauna of Lundy is said to be very remarkable. Amongst the rarer feathered visitants may be mentioned the rose-coloured pastor, the buff-breasted sandpiper, the golden oriole, Bohemian waxwing, hoopoe, &c. Feathered songsters too abound; and when 'the time of the singing of the birds is come,' the air is stirred with their

thousand lyrics. But the chief feathered inhabitants of the island are the sea-birds, the variety of which, as at St Kilda, would well repay a visit of the ornithologist.

BY-LAW No. 7.

I HAVE only two companions—the one a good-natured-looking, middle-aged gentleman with a mild benevolent expression, strangely at variance with the nervous restlessness of his eyes; the other a grim taciturn man, who has been absorbed in his paper ever since the train left Edinburgh en route for the South. They had got in together, and were evidently travelling companions. Rather a queerly assorted couple; for from their dress and general appearance there could be no doubt but that their stations in life were widely apart. What could they be? Master and servant? Evidently not; for the humbler of the two seemed to have control of all their travelling arrangements. A detective and his prisoner? I think not; for the one looks too much at ease to have a troubled conscience; and the other, though evidently in command, treats his companion with more deference than is compatible with the conscious power of a captor.

My speculations on this point have filled up a gap in the journey. Having read all the war telegrams in the morning paper, which I know I will find contradicted in the evening editions when I reach London; and having watched the telegraph wires gliding up and down beside the carriage-window, anon disappearing suddenly into space, only to reappear as suddenly to continue their monotonous up-and-down motion, I am beginning to weary of this, and if neither of my companions volunteers a remark, I must do something to force a conversation.

We are past Dunbar by this time, and are fast approaching Berwick. I have been vainly trying to catch the restless eyes of my apparently more companionable companion. He is now closing them, and evidently settling down for a quiet nap. My more taciturn friend has never taken his attention off his paper; he must either be a very slow reader, or having exhausted the news, he must have fallen on the advertisements. I offer him my paper. He takes it with a bow, giving me his own in exchange—*The Banffshire Gazette*. No news to be got out of that after having exhausted *The Scotsman*. I am soon reduced to the births, marriages, and deaths. Much interested to know that the wife of Hugh Macdonald stone-mason has presented him with a son; also to hear that Mrs McQueen is dead; and the nursery rhyme I sometimes hear my wife repeating to our boys occurs to me, and I mentally inquire, 'How did she die?' The announcement does not, however, enlighten me on that point; though it is easy to guess, seeing that it contains the further information that she departed this life at one hundred and one years of age, and is deeply regretted. The latter assertion I fear is only a conventional fib, for I find in a paragraph announcing her death as a local centenarian, that she had great possessions, which have fallen to her nearest surviving relative, a great-grand-nephew.

My friend opposite is fairly off to sleep. Quite clear that he has nothing on his conscience. The other is as deep in *The Scotsman* as he was ere-while in his own paper. I can't stand this any

longer. Talk I must. *The Banffshire Gazette* is published in the county town bearing the same name; so I see my way to an opening.

'You come from Banff, I presume? You must have been travelling all night? No wonder our friend here is worn out.'

'We have come from Banff,' replies my friend, with no trace of the churl in his voice or manner that his appearance would lead me to expect.

'We have come from Banff; but we have not travelled all night. Our governor makes it a point never to over-fatigue any of his patients. It's part of his system; so we broke our journey at Edinburgh.'

His patients! I would as soon have suspected my opposite neighbour of being a criminal as an invalid.

'Indeed,' I say. 'Might I inquire what is his complaint?'

My taciturn friend touches his head in a mysterious way, and I am just in time to stop a low whistle indicative of surprise, and to turn it into another 'Indeed.'

'What particular form does his—ahem—complaint take?'

I am beginning to hope he is not violent.

'Generosity.'

'Generosity?'

'Yes, sir. You see he gets all sorts of schemes into his head for the relief of suffering of all kinds; and his friends, fearing he might make ducks and drakes of his money, have put him under the care of our governor.'

'Is he wealthy?'

'Very.'

'Are his friends quite disinterested?'

'Well, I don't know. But at anyrate they are quite right. He might fall into the hands of unprincipled people, who would help out his schemes to further their own.'

'What is his latest plan?'

'Well, sir, his last idea was, that ambitious people who had failed in their aims—such as authors whose books were roughly handled by the critics, artists whose works did not meet with the appreciation they expected, actors whose genius was not universally recognised, and such-like—were a great bore to society, and in their turn were inclined to shun the world; so he proposed building a retreat where all such could retire to seclusion—a kind of Agapemone, you see, sir.'

'If he had found a scanty population for his rural settlement, it would nevertheless not be for the lack of such people.'

'Just so, sir.'

'Do you consider his a hopeless case?'

'I fear so, sir. He's one of the quiet sort, you see. More violent cases are often easier to deal with. Our governor turned out a rare wild one quite cured the other day.'

'What was his treatment?'

'Letting him have his own way. It's part of our governor's system; but it was rather risky in this case.'

I feel interested, and I intimate as much.

'Well, sir, Captain B— had been down with the yellow fever in the West Indies, and it was such a severe attack that the doctors gave him up as a bad job, and handed him over to the black nurses to do what they could for him. They

pulled him through, but with such strong doses of quinine, that before he was convalescent his reason was gone. His was suicidal mania—about the worst kind we have to do with, for the patient always has his victim handy if he can only get the means. They had a rare job to get him over to England; and when he was first put under the governor's care, he was about the worst case we had. The governor studied him carefully, and found that letting him have his own way was the only thing that did him any good. He was very fond of bathing; and by-and-by, when he began to mend a little, he was allowed to go to a river near our place. Of course I always went too, and kept a pretty sharp eye on him. However, this did not suit him; so one day he goes to the governor and says: "Dr —, it is not congenial to my feelings as a gentleman, always to have that fellow with me when I take my bath; I would much prefer privacy." The governor tried to put him off; but the contradiction had a bad effect on him. Now one of the governor's theories is, that at a certain stage of the complaint, if you can humour patients, they have every chance of recovery; cross them, and it is gone. "Captain B—," says he, "I know that if you pass your word to me, you will keep it like a man of honour; so if you will give me your word as an officer and gentleman that if I let you go alone you will return to me in an hour and report yourself, I will let you go." Captain B— gave his word as required, and every day he used to do the same, always coming to give his word of honour, and returning each day to report himself, proud of being trusted. It was rather risky treatment for a suicidal patient, but it succeeded. He's as well now, sir, as you or I.

"There was another case we had, quite different!"

I have settled myself into a listening attitude; but my friend has suddenly ceased. Looking up, I find my opposite neighbour has just awakened; and his attendant having perhaps no other topic of conversation than his professional experiences, which he no doubt rightly considers an inappropriate subject to discuss before one of his charges, has relapsed to his perusal of *The Scotsman*, nor do I hear another word from him till he bids me good-day at York.

"Grantham, Grantham!"

I have been following the example of the generous lunatic, and taking a nap which almost deserves the name of a sleep. I awake to the glorious conviction that I am nearing my journey's end, and have unconsciously got over about one hundred miles of loneliness. I have still some hours before me yet, however, and seem doomed to perform that part of the journey solus. What shall I do to fill up the time? Happy thought! Smoke! But this is not a smoking compartment, and by-law No. 7 says "that any person smoking in any carriage other than a smoking carriage shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding forty shillings." Bother by-law No. 7!

I call the guard. The first-class smoking compartment is full. Well, what's to be done? A small business transaction between the guard and myself; beginning with my hand in my pocket and ending with his in his; and he suggests that as I am all alone and by his favour likely to be so, I may as well smoke where I am. I light up amidst evident preparations for a start, and am

quietly settling down to the enjoyment of my cigar when the door hurriedly opens and I have a companion—a man about my own height and age, altogether not very unlike me. (I am of that mediocre mould in which nature has formed so many of my fellow-creatures.)

I am to have a companion after all. Well, so much the better. It will be somebody to talk to and pass the time. I wonder if he is as taciturn as my companions at the outset of the journey. Evidently not; he is recovering his breath after his hurry, and is preparing to address me.

"I'll trouble you to put that cigar out, sir! I object to smoke."

"But, sir?"

"Here, guard! Tell this person to put his cigar out at once. This is not a smoking compartment."

"Plenty of room in the next carriage, sir. Would you mind stepping in there?"

"Yes; I would mind. By-law No. 7 says, &c. &c.," says my companion, standing blocking up the doorway and arguing with the guard.

"Very sorry, sir; but you must put out your cigar."

"Can't I go into the next carriage?"

"Two ladies in there, sir—old ladies!"

"Have you any empty compartment?"

"We're just off, sir," says the guard, slamming to the door, and the next minute we are spinning on our way to Peterborough.

Shall I put out my cigar? I have been alluded to as a "person." I have been addressed in a dictatorial manner, which has the very reverse of a soothing influence on me. I feel ruffled and obstinate. Had I been asked politely, my Havana had been out of the window in a twinkling. Shall I put it out or infringe by-law No. 7, and be fined forty shillings? I will finish my cigar, and abide by the consequences.

My companion is evidently as unaccustomed to opposition as I am to dictation, and for a few minutes he stares at me dumfounded, then he lets fly his own version of King James's Counterblast against Tobacco. On my part I preserve an obstinate silence. My companion pulls up the window on his side; I put up that on mine, which produces a violent fit of coughing on his part, when down go both windows in a hurry.

We have arrived at Peterborough, and the guard is again called. I have almost finished my cigar, and I throw the end away. My companion cannot let the matter rest, however, and when we are started again, he reads me another lecture, couched in such unacceptable terms that for reply I light another cigar.

"Sir, here is my card; and I insist upon knowing your name and address."

I take his card, open my card-case, put his card in, and return the case to my pocket without giving him my card in exchange. I finish my cigar amidst a volley of threats of getting my name and address by force.

We are at Finsbury Park now, and tickets are being collected. This is the nearest station to my home, and here I intend to leave the train. My companion follows me up the platform, and calls the guard to take my name and address. Being under the scrutiny of the other passengers, who evidently think I have got into trouble for card-sharpping, and having made up my mind to pay the penalty, I lose no time in giving my card.

At home I am received with open arms, and I am hurried into the dining-room by my boys to inspect a device over the sideboard for my especial benefit—'Welcome' in blue letters on a white ground. My wife is full of inquiries after all our friends in Edinburgh, and what sort of a journey I have had.

Having informed her that individually and collectively all our friends are as well as could be expected, considering the wintry weather they have had, and that all were as kind and hospitable as ever, I briefly tell her of my smoking adventure.

'And who was your companion?' asks my wife.

'How should I know?'

'Why, you have his card.'

'To be sure; I quite forgot that,' say I, producing my card-case. I search it through carefully, but no card, other than my own, can I find.

'I know I put it in here. Why, bless me! I must have given it to the guard instead of my own. How odd!'

I have almost dismissed the adventure from my mind, when a few days later my wife, in skimming over the paper at the breakfast-table, breaks out into a merry laugh. What on earth can she find so amusing in any other than the 'Agony' column! which I can see is not the portion under perusal. It is the police reports, and she hands me the paper, pointing out the place for my attention.

At the Police Court, J—B— of Verandah House, Crouch Hill, was summoned by the Great Northern Railway Company for smoking in a carriage not a smoking carriage, to the annoyance of other passengers. The guard having proved identity, and the accused's card, given up by himself, being put in as corroborative evidence, the magistrate asked the defendant if he had anything to say in reply. An attempt was made to prove that the accused was really the complainant, and that he had given the card produced to the real offender; which the magistrate characterised as an impudently lame defence, and fined the defendant in the full penalty of forty shillings.

'My dear,' says my wife.

'Well, my dear? I respond.

'Verandah House is that pretty place that has just been finished a little further up the hill. Don't you think that you behaved in rather an unneighbourly manner?'

'Did our neighbour behave any better?'

'At all events he has suffered unjustly. This cannot be allowed to pass. Don't you think you had better call and apologise?'

'Well, I'll think about it.'

On my way home from the station that evening I rang the visitor's bell at Verandah House, and was in due course ushered into the presence of the eccentric proprietor. Our recognition was mutual; and as my neighbour approached me, I prepared to put myself in a defensive attitude. His hand, however, was not extended to commit an assault, and before I could stammer out the elaborate apology I had prepared, I was forestalled by a hearty shake of the hand and an apology from the quondam fire-eater!

Under such circumstances it may easily be guessed that a satisfactory understanding was soon arrived at, and an exchange of invitations to spend the remainder of the evening in each other's society ended in my returning home with my neighbour as my guest. I am very partial to

an after-dinner cigar. Having already committed myself, however, I determined to practise a little self-denial; but what was my surprise, when I had carried off my neighbour to my study to shew him a few rare volumes of which I am almost as proud as I am of my children, to see my friend produce a cigar-case, and not only offer me the means of indulging my favourite weakness, but himself preparing to join in it.

'You may well look surprised,' said he; 'but in truth I am an inveterate smoker. I passed many years of my life in Havana, and these cigars—which I venture to say you will find remarkably good—are of my own importation.'

'But you expressed such contrary opinions the other day.'

'The fact is, that when in the West Indies I suffered from a severe attack of yellow fever, and the remedial appliances so affected my mind that for some time I had to be placed under restraint. Thanks to the skill of a clever practitioner, I am cured; but my old malady still shews itself in occasional fits of uncontrollable obstinacy.'

'I beg your pardon,' say I; 'but are you not a military man?'

'Yes; I was captain in the —th Regiment.'

Captain B—! My mind reverts to the story I had heard on the morning of our first meeting. But was our friend as thoroughly cured as his ex-keeper seemed to imagine? I can't say, but I know that he is an excellent neighbour. He treats his misadventure as a capital joke; and it is likely to be a stock story for the rest of his life how he was fined forty shillings by the railway company, because another passenger had infringed by-law No. 7!

THE LITTLE DOG MATCH.

FIFTY years ago my great-grandmother sat in the porch of her cottage, looking with pleasure on the fragrant flowers growing in her garden and listening to the song of her canaries hanging over her head. It was a sultry August evening; and gradually the sky overcast, a solemn stillness stole over the scene, while large drops of rain and heavy claps of thunder denoted the approach of a storm. She rose and removed her birds to the interior of the cottage. On returning to the open door she saw a woman dragging wearily up the garden-path followed by a lean and hungry-looking dog.

'For the love of mercy, ma'am,' began the tramp, 'please to buy a box or two of matches of a poor woman, for I've not tasted food this blessed day.'

My great-grandmother looked at her with pity. Benevolence formed a large ingredient in her character. Here stood a fellow-creature whose forlorn appearance and sickly countenance denoted her condition as plainly as her words; while the famished animal beside her was evidently unable to travel farther. The good old lady spoke at once in her primitive hospitality.

'Come in, poor soul, and sit ye down and rest. A storm is coming up. Here, take this meal, and enjoy it. You are truly welcome.'

She busied herself in setting food before the wanderer, and then turned to the wanderer's companion, her dog. 'The poor dumb beast is nearly dead,' she said; and amid the violence of the storm she exercised the bidding of the apostle to the best of her ability.

As soon as the tempest subsided the woman rose to go, full of gratitude for the kindness shewn her. The dog reposed comfortably on a rug, and seemed indisposed to quit his new home.

'Would you care to have the dog, mistress?' said the owner. 'He's none so handsome; but he'd guard thy house; and it's part we must, sooner or later. He'll have a blessed exchange, that's certain.'

My great-grandmother thanked her and expressed her pleasure at the prospect of keeping the dog. The woman went her way; her canine companion stayed in his new home, and was, in remembrance of his former owner, named Match. He proved faithful and affectionate to his mistress, and soon learned to distinguish her particular friends; while to members of her family he ever paid the greatest attention, trotting regularly every day to see her daughter, my grandmother, who lived in the next village, about a mile apart. He would, if the front-door was open, walk through the house to the part where the family lived, receive and return their greetings, walk to a particular mat which lay at the foot of the staircase, lie down for a time, and then return.

After he had lived some years with my aged relative, a nephew of hers from the border of Sherwood Forest, came to pay her a visit, and witnessing the intelligence and fidelity of Match, begged him as a present. Very loath she was to part from her faithful friend; but the entreaties of her favourite nephew prevailed, and when he returned home he took the dog with him. His journey was performed partly by stage-wagons, partly on foot. Finally he wrote to announce his safe arrival at home, with Match. Three weeks later, as my grandmother and her daughters sat at work one afternoon with open doors and windows, the apparition of an emaciated dog stumbled over the threshold, crawled feebly through the room to his accustomed corner, and sank exhausted upon the mat, too far gone to do more than raise his eyes for sympathy to his well-known friends. There was a great outcry. 'It is poor Match!' Work was thrown aside and all gathered round the dog. His bleeding feet were bathed, and some milk given him, which he drank eagerly, afterwards licking the hands outstretched to help; then, with a sigh of relief and contentment, he fell asleep, and stirred not all night. But in the early morning, with a joyous bark, he bounded off through the doorway, and swiftly made his way to his dear old home, where he was received with every demonstration of delight, which he returned with interest.

From that time to the day of his death, some years later, Match was regarded as a hero, having travelled more than one hundred miles on foot, a road over which he had passed only once. Afterwards it transpired that he had experienced a beating for attempting to escape previously; and when his flight was discovered, it was at once conjectured whither he had gone, although it was

considered impossible for him to accomplish the journey. Like many humble heroes, Match never played a prominent part out of his own circle; but among the family in which he lived his name is handed down as an instance of true fidelity. He had no pretensions to beauty, being a sandy-coloured dog with short rough hair; but must have possessed great powers of endurance and a wonderful memory.

PHONOGRAPH ODDITIES.

PROFESSOR FLEEMING JENKIN has applied the phonograph to a very interesting series of observations on the wave-forms of articulate sound. By a process of enlargement of the vibrations caused by the indented tinfoil, he, with the assistance of Mr J. A. Ewing, has obtained a large series of markings, upon bands of paper, by which the wave-forms of different sounds have been shewn. Some of those results Professor Jenkin has laid before the Royal Society of Edinburgh. The vowel sounds in the phonograph are found not to be dependent on the speed with which the cylinder of the phonograph is turned, the distinct vowel being heard however much the pitch of the note may be altered. He found that the phonograph resolutely refused to reproduce the French *u*, converting it always into the sound of *oo*. On the black-board, Professor Jenkin illustrated some of the constant forms assumed by the sound-waves, one of the most interesting being those of the letter *r*. In the case of the broad sound of *a*, it was shewn that while with most ordinary voices the wave took the form which might be described as having two humps, a rich bass voice had been found to give a wave-form much more intricate, shewing four distinct humps in each recurrent period of vibration. It was found that the phonograph gave vowel sounds, as well when the cylinder was turned backwards as forwards; and encouraged by this, the consonants were experimented upon, giving the same result. Even with a consonant at the beginning and end of a syllable, as, for example, *bah*, it was rather unexpectedly found that the word would be correctly repeated either way; shewing the identity of the sound. Professor Jenkin gave some amusement by describing the effects of reading words backwards, stating that with careful observation every sound could be heard, as, for example, in 'Association,' which, when the cylinder was reversed, could be distinctly heard as 'nosh-a-i-sho-sa.' In 'Edinburgh'—which he said Mr Ewing could pronounce backwards, though he could not—the various sounds could also be distinguished. Words and sentences which when pronounced backwards or forwards sound the same, were tried. Thus was tried the well-known sentence, 'Madam, I'm Adam,' with which Adam is traditionally alleged to have saluted Eve; but 'Madam, I'm Adam,' although spelt the same both ways, did not sound the same in the phonograph, the diphthongal sound of the 'I'm' giving a sound like 'mya.' It is obvious from Professor Fleeming Jenkin's experiments that some interesting points in acoustics may yet be settled by means of this extraordinary instrument.

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OUR CANAL POPULATION.

As much interest has lately been roused concerning the population habitually living in the English canal traffic boats, we offer the following particulars on the subject from the personal observation of a correspondent. His narrative is as follows:

After allowing one or two barges to pass, the occupants of which seemed to be surly ill-favoured folks, one at length came in sight which answered our purpose, and we shall begin with it.

A cleanly dressed woman looked up at us with a pleasant smile upon her face as we bade her 'good-day,' her husband at the same time answering our salutation heartily. Whilst waiting for the lock to fill he came to our side and volunteered some sensible remarks on the great saving of water effected by the use of the side-pound system, which led to a conversation between us, and eventually to an invitation to step on board and go with them as far as Brentford. Accordingly we stepped on board; but at first had some little difficulty in bestowing our person out of the way of the long tiller, which swept completely over the available standing-room in rear of the cabin door, and momentarily threatened to force us overboard.

When at length we were well under way, and the man had relieved his wife at the helm, she invited us to inspect the interior of their cabin, apologising for its unfurnished state as compared with other cabins, on the ground that she did not habitually accompany her husband on his voyages, preferring to stay at home, when possible, to keep the house in order. With no little pride, however, she pointed out the usual arrangement of cupboards, lockers, shelves, hooks, &c., by which the limited space of nine feet by six was made to contain the utensils and necessaries for the use of a whole family. As was natural to a good housewife, she dilated mostly upon the cooking capabilities of a wonderfully small fire-place, erected close by the doorway, at which, she averred, she could cook as

readily as at home. We looked sharply round for the sleeping accommodation, but failing to discover anything resembling a bedstead—other than the tops of the lockers placed round two sides of the cabin, and which we calculated could not possibly accommodate more than three persons—were considerably puzzled to understand how such families as we had seen on the other boats were disposed of at night. The roof was not high enough to admit of hammocks being slung; nor was the space between the lockers sufficient to allow of a bed being made up on the floor. Unable to solve the puzzle ourselves, we suggested that surely, where there was a family of five or six children, they did not all sleep in the cabin.

'Indeed, but they do,' replied our hostess. 'And this is how they manage. The father and mother with the youngest baby sleep at the end there, with maybe the next youngest at their feet; then a couple of the children at this side; and another, or two, under here.'

'Under here' being the space beneath the father's bed, a very kennel, closed on all sides except a portion of the front corresponding to the width of the floor—about three feet. That children even could sleep in so confined a space without suffering permanently in health seems contrary to all natural laws; but as a matter of fact, barge-men and their families appear to be remarkably healthy. Expressing our surprise that any person could possibly sleep in so cramped a space, our informant continued: 'Bless you! that's nothing. When there's a butty, he sleeps as best he can on the floor.'

'And pray, what is a butty?' we inquire.

'Well, you see, by rights there must be two able-bodied people on board every boat, besides a lad or a lass to take turn about at driving. Generally it's the man's wife. But sometimes it happens as she's sick or what not; and then they have to get a growing lad of sixteen or seventeen to butty with them for a voyage or two; and then of course he lives and sleeps on the boat along with the family. Not as you must run away with the idea that we all of us live entirely in

the boats, as a good many of us have as good homes on shore as you'd wish to put foot in. But on the other hand, there's as many more who don't sleep out of the boat once a year, and hardly know what the inside of a house is like.

'Do I mean to say that children are born in these cabins? Indeed I do, sir. What is more, many's the child that is not only born on board but *dies* on board too; for as I told you, there's many that have no other home than the boat, and no friends but what are boatmen too. So what are they to do? with their husbands a-travelling all over the country; Birmingham one week, and Brentford here maybe, the next. Plenty of 'em indeed have got so used to the boats it would be downright cruel if they were to be compelled to live in a house ashore like decent people; because, you see, everything's so different, and they've become so used to making shift in little room, that they'd be regularly lost in a house.'

'How do they get on when they're sick? Well, you see, it's mostly a town that we tie up at, at night, and there's generally a doctor to be found, however late it may be; and they get medicine that way. I once lost a little girl on board. She was taken a little queer on the Sunday night before we were to start on this very same voyage on the Monday morning. It so happened that the master couldn't get a butty, and so we'd arranged as I should come down with him; though of course we never dreamt as there was anything serious the matter with little Polly, or I wouldn't have stirred with her. All day Monday and Tuesday the child got so much worse, that when we tied up at night I made the master take her to a doctor and get some medicine for her. Of course we were obliged to go on the next day, with little Polly getting worse and worse every hour, so that at night we were afraid to take her on shore, and had to pay a doctor to come on board and see her. I hardly liked the thought of going on the next day; but we were on a time voyage, by which the master was bound to be in Brentford on a certain day, and so we had to go on. But before night little Polly died. All that evening my master tried to get somebody to take his boat on; but it was a busy time just then, and there wasn't a boatman to be got for love or money. We had some thoughts of going on ourselves; but almost as soon as it was daylight the next morning a policeman came on board and stopped us, saying, as no doctor had attended the child, there'd have to be an inquest. It was no use me a-shewing him the medicine bottles, and saying as two doctors had seen her; he wouldn't believe us. Nor it wasn't till two days afterwards, after my master had been to the last doctor and got him to give him a letter to the coroner, that we could get leave to bury the child; which we did, with not a soul belonging to her following her except my husband in his working clothes, I myself being too poorly to keep the poor man company in seeing the last of her.'

'As for children being born in the cabins, sir, I know several women who have had large families all born on board the boat while it was making its voyage, with perhaps nobody at all to attend on them except their husband, or some woman from another boat which chanced to be working mates with them.'

'Both my lads can read and write; but there's

nine out of ten as you see on the boats can't tell "A" from a bull's foot, and on that account the new Act is sure to do good. But my husband can tell you more about that than I can, and he'll have done for a mile or two when we get through this next lock.'

'None such easy work after all—is it, sir?' inquired the husband, as after passing through several locks all within a few score paces of each other, at every one of which he had been very hard at work opening and closing sluices, he stepped on board the barge and took the helm from his wife. 'There is them as thinks we barges have nought to do all day except lean our arms on the tiller, smoke our pipes, and chaff anybody we come across. But you can see for yourself, sir, as we have all our work at times.'

Having expressed our conviction that on that point he was right, we requested him to enlighten us on several matters connected with his particular class, which he willingly did somewhat as follows.

'About our earnings? Well, I suppose we can't grumble as times go. Take it all the year round, one week with another, I and the lads earn perhaps a couple of pounds. We get paid mostly by the voyage—so much a ton from one place to another; and if we could only get loaded up as soon as we emptied, we shouldn't make a bad thing of it; but the worst of it is the waiting about for a load when one voyage is finished before we can start on another. The boats the master finds; but the horse is my own; and out of what I make I have to feed him, which must be on the best of corn and hay that can be got for money; otherwise, he'd never be able to get through the tramp, tramp, for five-and-twenty or thirty miles—sometimes more—which he has to do day after day, wet and fine. Look at that corn, sir! Better you won't find in any gentleman's stable, I'll warrant. And I find that in the long-run it comes the cheapest, for where those as feeds their horses on anything, wear out two or three, I don't use up one. Of course we don't walk the whole day through, alongside the horse; but we take it turn about, five or six miles at a spell; though sometimes when we are working quick voyages, night and day that is—owners finding relays of horses—we have regular hours to drive, like watches on board ship; but there ain't much of that kind of work now. Our day's work is mostly over by dark, sometimes sooner, sometimes later, all depending on the place we choose to tie up at, or the time we have to wait to pass the locks.'

'Do I think that railways will do away with canals in time? No, sir; I don't. Because, you see, there's lots of goods as don't well bear the packing and unpacking as is necessary for railway travelling, as can be put straight on board a barge and never be shaken even, till they are unloaded just at the very place where they are wanted. And lots of other goods there are that we can carry cheaper than the railway, where a day or two more on the road don't matter. Besides which, there's plenty of brickfields, collieries, ironworks, and such like just on the canal banks and some distance from railroads, that will always use barges to save the expense of carting; so that I don't think canals will go out of fashion yet awhile. And that's why I'm glad to hear as they're passing an Act to do something for the poor children. You see it's just this way, sir: our people as a

rule don't know how to read and write themselves, most of 'em having been on the boats since they could remember, and therefore they don't see why they shouldn't have the advantage of their children's assistance in working the barge, the same as their fathers had.

'There's another way in which I think the Act will do good, and that is this. It will teach our women perhaps to have a little more decency about them than some of the worst of them have. If you'll believe me, sir, I see scenes on the canal sometimes, when some of the worst of them have been paid, as I can't bear to look at, though not nearly so commonly now as I used to. And then again, it doesn't always follow as because a man and woman work the same boat that they are married. In fact, in my opinion it would be a good thing if the lasses were not allowed on board after they had grown up to be twelve or thirteen, as it stands to reason that they're nearly sure to grow up bargewomen. And after all's said and done, it's no fitting life for a woman to lead. As you've seen for yourself there's a good deal of hard work attached to it, even on a fine day like this; but in winter-time it's simply cruel to a woman who has a young baby. However, I suppose when our children are compelled to go to school, as they say this new Act compels them, there'll be a stop put to a good deal of what's wrong about us, and perhaps folks may not have so good a reason for looking upon us as something worse than themselves. People seem to think that generally we are a regular bad lot; but I fancy if they knew a little more about us they'd see that, though there are some bad ones amongst us, take us all in all we are no worse than most of our neighbours. We seem somehow to have got a name for interfering with people as we chance to come across; but you may see for yourself, sir, that we have quite as much as we can do to mind our own business, and a bargeman can no more afford to neglect his business than anybody else, if he means to do any good in the world.

'What becomes of us when we get old? Well, most of us stick to the barges as long as we can; and when we are obliged to give up, if we haven't by enough to keep us comfortable, which I'm sorry to say as there ain't many of us do, there's generally a lock to be got or a job of some sort at the docks; all depending on the sort of character we've kept.

'Here we are, sir, at our journey's end for this time,' he added, as the boat slowly floated into a small open basin, there to remain for the night. The boatman's wife, being already shawled and armed with a capacious basket, stepped on shore as soon as the boat came nearly enough; and with a cheerful 'good-night' to us, went away to do her marketing before the shops should close.

Tying up the boat, my bargee friend sent off the boys with the horse to its stable, and proceeded to gather together and stow away in their respective lockers the odds and ends which had been in use during the day; remarking as he did so, that though there were watchmen kept in every dock, it often happened that the barges were robbed of any loose things which might be left about, and therefore it was that most of the boats had a dog on board, who made a better policeman than all the watchmen. With a last glance round he took

from one of the cupboards a dirty paper, and unfolding it for our inspection, said: 'There, you see, reading and writing would be of some use to us after all; for according to what tonnage is put down there, we get paid. And as you see, wherever we pay tolls they put down the time we pass, so that if we get drinking or loitering about for a day the owners know it, and make up our character according.

'Yes; I'm going to sleep on board; but I must go and report our arrival at the office, and see as the horse is all right first. And as for what I've told you, I'm sure you're very welcome to know it, especially if it will only make you believe as if something was done to give our children a little reading and writing, and to stop so many lads and lasses being crammed together in the boats, there might be less respectable people than bargees.'

An undclouded moon was shining upon the calm water of the canal and upon the gaudily painted cabins of some twelve or thirteen barges, which lay motionless in the basin, displaying no other sign of human habitation than the thin columns of smoke which issued from their stove-pipes, as we bade our friend 'good-night,' and started on our homeward walk, well satisfied with the experience we had gained while spending an hour or two with some of 'our canal population.'

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XXIII.—JASPER FEELS PERPLEXED.

JASPER DENZIL, as he slowly made his elaborate toilet on the sunny September morning which succeeded to the eventful night on which he had espied from his window Ruth's slight form gliding across the lonely park, turned over many things in his mind. His man, who groaned over the dull monotony of rural existence, and longed to be once more in Mount Street or Bond Street lodgings, silently opined, as he applied the ivory-backed brushes to his master's hair or removed the silver-gilt stoppers of the scent-bottles, that 'the captain' was brooding over his tort calamities. But he was wrong. Jasper's rufic was on a different theme.

Who or what was this mysterious Miss Willis, this interesting orphan, whom regard for the mythical major her defunct papa had induced Sir Sykes to take into the bosom of his family? The conversation which he had overheard when lurking in the frowsy garden of *The Traveller's Rest* recurred again and again to his memory, and served to explain much, but not all. That the presence beneath his roof-tree of Ruth Willis had been imposed upon the hospitality of Hold's hospitality, he well knew. That he had with his own ears heard Hold describe her as his sister, he well remembered, but he recalled too the sneering tone in which the adventurer had claimed kindred with the Indian orphan.

Of one thing alone did Captain Denzil feel sure. Ruth, be her understanding with Hold what it might, was a lady, and no blood-relation of the rough rover who claimed to be her brother. Who then was this Ruth? Again and again Jasper's thoughts flew back to the little sister that had died so early, and whose untimely death was reported to have made the owner of Carbury Chase the morose joyless recluse that he had long been.

Could it be—was it possible that the child had not died at all, that a false registry, a sham burial, had thrown dust in credulous eyes, and that the missing member of the family, hidden for years from all eyes, had at length been introduced under a fictitious name into the household?

A profound distrust of their fellow-creatures is usually a cardinal point of belief with young men of such tastes and habits as those of Jasper; nor did he find it difficult to accredit Sir Sykes with concealed villainy of some sort, or Miss Willis with not, as in sporting language he pitifully paraphrased it, 'running square.' But he did desire to find a conceivable motive of some kind; and in the absence of that was driven to speculations too wild to shape themselves in rational form.

'If the governor had been touched in the head!'—thus ran the son's dutiful meditations.—'I could have set down the thing as a rich man's crazed caprice; but no! he's as sound as a bell. And then that fellow the pirate actually bullying him to get this girl foisted upon us! What imaginable interest can he have in planting her at Carbery Chase, or what can be the bond of union between a refined dainty little creature and a buccannering varmint of his stamp? The whole affair is a riddle.'

It might be added that Jasper was not an adept in the solution of such social puzzles. Turf rascalities of any sort came quite naturally within the compass of an understanding well fitted to grasp all that could be done on the offensive or the defensive where a race-horse was concerned. He knew as much as an outsider could know regarding touts and horse-watchers, stable strategy and the tactics of the course. He no more expected straightforward conduct on the part of an owner than on that of a trainer or of a jockey. He did not except even those owners, trainers, and jockeys, whose honesty was proverbial on the English turf. The money to be won was in his eyes motive sufficient for any moral obtuseness. But the behaviour of Sir Sykes did not square itself with any of his ethical theories, however tolerant.

When, for the very first time since his accident at the steeplechase, Captain Denzil made his appearance at the family breakfast-table, he received the congratulations of his sisters on the marked improvement in his looks. And it was a fact that he not merely seemed but felt in better health than before, in spite of the loss of sleep incumbent on his vigil of the previous night. The activity of his thoughts had stirred his languid pulses and lent a pleasing vigour to his sluggish mind, and he even began to find existence at Carbery more endurable since his fancy had been stimulated by the partial discovery which he had chanced upon.

'I should like to have a word with you, Jasper,' said Sir Sykes. (It was a very unusual thing for him to say.) 'You will find me in the library after breakfast.'

Jasper, who had been stealthily admiring the calm unconcern with which Miss Willis met his gaze, and the perfect steadiness of that young lady's nerves, started, but instantly recovered himself. 'To be sure, sir,' he said, toying with his tea-spoon, while his heart quickened its beating. The enigma was about to be solved then. He could not doubt that the communication which

his father had to make had reference to the strange doings of which Carbery Chase had of late been the theatre.

Sir Sykes, in his favourite apartment, was not kept waiting very long. His only son, in obedience to his father's invitation, sauntered in with his customary air of nonchalant indifference, and took his seat loungingly in an easy-chair opposite to that of Sir Sykes. The baronet seemed at a loss for words wherewith to begin the announcement he desired to make.

'You are nearly yourself again, Jasper, after your heavy fall?' said Sir Sykes, by way of a prelude to the conversation.

'Yes; thanks. My arm is a little troublesome, but otherwise I am getting on capitally,' replied Jasper after an instant's hesitation. He had hesitated in diplomatic doubt as to whether the part of an invalid would stand him in better stead than that of a flourishing convalescent, but contented himself with giving an ambiguous answer. Had Captain Progers or any sporting friend put the query, 'I feel fit and well' would have been the appropriate rejoinder; but with his parent the ex-Lancer did not care to lose any coigne of vantage-ground.

'I am glad of it; mechanically returned the baronet; and then there was another pause, more awkward than the last.

'My boy,' said Sir Sykes, plunging with an effort into the subject nearest to his thoughts, 'you can't suppose that I like to see you wasting your young life in indolent inaction, or that I am blind to the fact that the quiet humdrum ways of Carbery often pall upon you.'

Jasper pricked up his ears. Here was an exordium which promised well, too well almost. Could it be possible that his father was going to sign, so to speak, his social ticket-of-leave, and to send him back where Fashion reigned supreme—to London, Newmarket, Melton? Had the Fates grown kind; and could he, Jasper Denzil, with a satisfactory bank balance, once more take his place in the constellation of the gilded youth of Britain? He opened his lazy eyes a very little wider, and looked at his father with a renewed interest in the next words that he should hear.

'The case,' went on Sir Sykes, 'lies in a nutshell. You are discontented simply because you have nothing to occupy you and no one to care for. I should like very much, Jasper, to see you happily married; I should indeed.'

Jasper stared. His roscate visions of a prompt reappearance in betting-rings and military clubs were fading fast. But this novel anxiety on the part of Sir Sykes as to his son's matrimonial future might be twisted somehow into the foundation of at least a qualified prosperity. 'He can't mean,' such was Jasper's inward soliloquy, 'myself and my wife to be mere pensioners, living indolently here at Carbery. He must do something for us, he must indeed; unless it is a heiress he is about to suggest as a desirable daughter-in-law.'—'I suppose I must marry, like other people, some of these days,' said Jasper, with Pall-Mall philosophy.

'And there is this advantage in your position,' returned Sir Sykes, in a quick hurried manner, 'that you need not look for fortune in a wife. The heir-expectant of Carbery can afford to disregard such matters as dowry and portion.'

A little pink flush rose to the roots of Jasper's fair hair. He did not quite enjoy the hearing himself described as heir-expectant, not feeling sure but that a covert sneer was intended; but it was pleasant to be told that he was not expected to earn his bread, as he had known other broken-down men of fashion to do, by wedlock. Perhaps it was rank, not wealth, on which the governor's thoughts ran—perhaps Lady Gladys De Vere. But here Jasper's meditations were interrupted, and his thoughts turned into a new channel, when the baronet suddenly said: 'Has it never occurred to you that Miss Willis, our new inmate here at Carbery, was a very charming little person, a good girl, and a clever one, and who would make an excellent wife?'

The explosion of a hand-grenade would not have produced a more startling effect on Jasper's nerves than did this wholly unexpected speech on the part of Sir Sykes. For a moment or two he sat motionless, with arched eyebrows and parted lips, and then said, stammeringly: 'Why, I thought the relationship—no, not that, but I supposed—obstacle—marriage!'

It was for Sir Sykes then to look astonished. Either he was a consummate actor, or his son's last words had been to him utterly inexplicable.

'I hardly know,' said the baronet, in that cold half-haughty tone that had become habitual to him, 'to what you allude, or what insuperable stumbling-block you conceive to stand in your way, should you incline to do so sensible a thing as to pay your addresses to my ward, Miss Willis. She has, it is true, no fortune; but that deficiency, as I have already said, is one which I can easily remedy. In addition to Carbery Chase, which is quite,' he added with marked emphasis, 'at my own disposal, I have a large amount of personal property, and should be willing to settle a considerable income on your wife—I say on your wife, Jasper, because, unhappily, I cannot rely on your prudence where money is concerned.'

'I know I've made too strong running, know it well enough,' answered the ex-cavalry officer, stroking his yellow moustache; 'and I don't deny, sir, that you have treated me very kindly as to money and that. But really and seriously, sir, can you wish me to marry Miss Willis?'

'Really, my son, your pertinacity in cross-questioning me on the matter is—I am sure most unwittingly—almost offensive,' replied Sir Sykes nervously. 'Nor do I see what there would be so very wonderful in your selection of an amiable and accomplished girl, domiciled in your father's house, and the daughter of—poor Willis!' added the baronet in conclusion, as though the memory of the deceased major had suddenly recurred to him with unusual vividness.

Jasper, who remembered the conversation which he had overheard at *The Traveller's Rest*, fairly gasped for breath. His parent's talent for duplicity seemed to him to be something strange and shocking, as the untruthfulness of an elder generation always does appear.

'I should not have urged my views upon you as I have done,' continued Sir Sykes after a pause, 'but that I have some idea that the young lady who has been the unconscious subject of this conversation entertains—what shall I say?—a preference for your society, which her feminine tact enables her to hide from general notice. I feel

assured that it only rests with you to win the heart of Ruth Willis—a prize worth the winning.'

We are all very vain. Jasper, fop and worldling though he was, felt a thrill of gratified vanity run through him like an electric shock, as his father's artful suggestion sank into the depths of his selfish mind. But he made haste to put in a disclaimer.

'I'm afraid, sir, you are too partial a judge,' he said, with an involuntary glance at the Venice mirror opposite. 'Miss Willis is too sensible to care about a good-for-nothing fellow like me.'

'I think otherwise, Jasper,' returned Sir Sykes. 'However, for the present we have talked enough. My wishes, remember, and even—my welfare, for reasons not just now to be explained, are on the side of this marriage. Think it over. To you it means easy circumstances, a home of your own, the reversion of Carbery Chase, my cordial goodwill, and the society of a charming and high-principled wife. Think it over.'

'I will think it over, sir,' said Jasper, rising from his chair, and lounging out of the library with the same listless swagger as that with which he had lounged into it. 'I should be glad of course to meet your wishes, and that. Quite a surprise though.'

Left alone, Sir Sykes buried his face in his hands, and when he raised it again it looked old, worn, and haggard. 'That scoundrel Hold,' he said with a sigh, 'makes me pay a heavy price for his silence, and even now his motives are to me a problem that I cannot solve.'

(To be continued.)

CURIOUS THEATRE CUSTOMS IN PARIS.

The visitor to Paris may witness a kind of theatrical performance which is strikingly different from any that can be seen in Great Britain. We refer to the *Théâtre des Menus Plaisirs*, in the Boulevard de Strasbourg. Part of the entertainment here consists in certain of the actors and actresses criticising the performances which are proceeding upon the stage, from seats in various parts of the house—pit, circle, and gallery—which they have quietly got into unobserved by the audience. They assume the rôle of ordinary spectators who find themselves compelled in the interests of literature and art to remonstrate in a rather extraordinary manner against what they see and hear upon the stage; and the surprise of the uninitiated when the ball is set rolling is considerable.

The manager comes upon the stage and begins a modest speech upon past successes and future prospects; but he has not far advanced in his speech when a gentleman rises in the stalls, with hat in hand, and in the most respectful manner corrects him with regard to a word which he declares to be ill chosen and misleading, at the same time obliging the manager with the correct word. Here another gentleman introduces himself into the dispute, and complicates matters by a new suggestion, which involves the subject in inextricable confusion and absurdity. Both gentlemen are extremely polite, but firm in denying the right of the manager to that word; and the latter is driven frantic, and retires from the stage glaring at his antagonists.

Silence for a few seconds succeeds this scene,

when suddenly a man in the front seat of the gallery starts up from his seat with a wild cry, throws one leg over the gallery, hangs forward suspended from the railing, and gazes towards the pit entrance of the theatre. He sees something of absorbing interest, and with another cry he is about to throw himself over the gallery. The people scream; and then he finds he has been mistaken; he resumes a normal position, and looking round upon the audience with a kindly smile, which strangely contrasts with his late look of anxiety, he asks pardon for unnecessarily disturbing their composure, and resumes his seat. A tenor singer now comes upon the stage and commences a song; but the two critics in the stalls are particular, and take exception to his style; they do so with manifest regret, but the principles of art must be attended to. With profuse apologies, and an expressed hope that he will proceed with his song in the corrected form, the critics resume their seats. The tenor, at first exasperated, becomes mollified by the courteous manners of the gentlemen, and begins his song again; but almost immediately a lady sitting in the front seat of the circle tells him that he is in danger of dropping his moustache. This last is the final 'straw' on the back of the vocalist, and he retires in high dudgeon.

By the side of the lady in the circle there sits a meek-looking old gentleman, who being naturally shocked at the conduct of his wife, puts on his hat as if to leave the theatre; but the better-half is equal to the occasion, and knocks his hat over the meek old gentleman's eyes, and the meek old gentleman himself back into his seat. Presently several actresses appear upon the stage, and one of them commences to sing, with probably a pleasing sympathetic voice; but such is not the opinion of the lady, who holds the singer up to ridicule. The vocalist then stops, and engages in a verbal and violent encounter with her persecutor, who from her place in the 'circle' returns the badinage with interest, so that soon the other retires from the stage vanquished. The victor is now asked herself to sing, a request with which she readily complies, singing with abundant action and in good voice an exceedingly catching song, and at the chorus, giving a royal wave of the hands towards the gallery to join with her at that point.

The stranger will be surprised to learn that this disturbing element in the audience, in reality comes from behind the scenes; the lady who has just sung is the leading member of the company, and the gentlemen critics are well-known and highly appreciated comedians. And though the stranger may think that all this is an impromptu disturbance, it is quite certain that all is rehearsed as carefully as any play that is put upon the stage. How long such a performance would secure the favour of a London audience, is doubtful; here, however, it is an abiding success, is received with immense applause—the *claqueurs* or professional applauders being apparently altogether dispensed with—and the audience is kept in continual hilarity by the humorous attack and by the instant and witty reply.

Within the Parisian theatres the visitor may derive some amusement from observing the operations of the *claqueurs*, who are employed at the principal establishments to augment the enthu-

siasm of the audience. The men who compose this body of professional applauders appear to belong to the artisan class; they number from forty to fifty, that is they are about a hundred hands all told. They occupy the front row of seats in the second or third gallery, so that to observe them and their movements it is necessary to occupy a place in one of the galleries. Their leader sits in their midst, ever ready at the points marked for him by author or manager to give the signal which 'brings down the house.' As the moment arrives when the *bon-mot* shall be uttered, the *chef* breathes upon his hands, then stretches them slightly upwards, while he at the same time looks right and left along his ranks. This is equivalent to 'Attention' or 'Prepare to fire a volley.' Each man is now at the 'ready,' and waits anxiously upon the *chef*. When the *mot* is uttered, he brings his hands together with a frantic wave, and the others simultaneously with him make a very respectable, even enthusiastic show of applause. At the end of a song the leader starts the cry *Ploo, ploo* (plus, signifying more), in which all join; this, which is equivalent to our 'Encore,' sounds in the stranger's ears more like hooting than ought else; but it is no doubt as welcome to the French actor as a good British cheer is to an English one.

This little army, like all others, has its awkward squad. One evening at the 'Renaissance' we observed the *chef* to become very uneasy on account of one who was exceedingly remiss in his duty; not only was the amount of applause when given small in volume, but once when the signal was given he entirely neglected to comply with it. This was gall and wormwood to the leader, who really seemed a very earnest hard-working man in his profession; so after finishing the round of applause, he 'went for' that awkward man, remonstrated with him, and even gave him on the spur of the moment, a lesson on the correct method of clapping hands. After this the pupil shewed marked improvement, and by the end of the play performed his duty in such a satisfactory manner as promised well for his future advancement in this handy profession. The effect of this pernicious system upon the audience is very different, we should think, from what was anticipated when it was first organised; for finding that the applause is supplied by the establishment, just as it supplies programmes or turns on the gas, the audience feel that they are relieved from all obligations in the matter, and unless stirred by an irresistible influence, seldom dream of applauding at all.

THE RIVAL LAIRDS.

In a recent article on Curling we endeavoured to give a sketch of the history of this popular Scottish pastime, together with a brief outline of the mode in which the game is usually played. The following story of a match between two rival parishes, supposed to have been played about the beginning of the present century, may give the reader a further idea of the enthusiasm evoked on the ice whenever and wherever curlers gather. Let the non-initiated imagine himself standing beside a frozen sheet of water, upon which are assembled a company of men of various ranks from peer to peasant, each striving to do his best to support the prowess and honour of his rink. The rink let it be understood is a certain

portion of ice, from thirty to forty yards in length, apportioned off to the players. The players consist usually of four on each side, and whereas in the well-known game of grass-bowls, each player is provided with two wooden bowls which he drives towards a small white ball called the *jack*, each player on the ice has two curling-stones shaped much like a Gonda cheese—with a handle atop—which he propels or hurls towards a certain marked spot at each end of the rink, called the *tee*; and round each *tee* is scratched a series of concentric rings ranging from two to ten or twelve feet in diameter. Standing at one end of the rink the man whose turn it is to play, waits the bidding of his director or 'skip' who stands at the other end, and then endeavours to act according to the directions that may be given by that important personage. Each of the four players on one side plays alternately against his antagonist, the main object being to send the stone gliding up the ice so that it may eventually lie within the rings and as near the *tee* as possible. Thus, when the 'end' is finished, the side whose stones lie nearest the *tee* scores so many towards the game.

Sometimes when the ice is partially thawed the players have difficulty in hurling their stones all the way to the *tee*; and sometimes they fail to get them beyond a transverse mark called the 'hog-score,' two-thirds down the rink—in which case the lagging stone is put off the ice and cannot count for that 'end.' Besides, however, with which each man is armed, are here of great account, the laws of the game permitting each player to sweep the ice in front of an approaching stone belonging to his side, so as to accelerate its progress, if necessary. The shouts of 'Sweep, sweep!' or rather '*Scop, scop!*' are of continual recurrence, and are exceedingly amusing to strangers. The skip on each side first directs his three men and then lastly plays himself. On his generalship in skipping much depends, his efforts being mainly directed first to get as many stones as possible near the *tee*, and then to get his men to 'guard' them from being driven off by those of the opposite side. Or he may direct a player to aim at a certain stone already lying, with a view to take an angle, or 'wick' as it is termed, and so land his own stone near the *tee*. This wicking is a very pretty part of the game and requires great delicacy of play.

The anxiety of the opposing skips is very amusing to watch, and the enthusiasm of the several players when an unusually good shot is made, is boundless. A good 'lead' or first player, though he is necessarily debarr'd from the niceties of the game which fall to the lot of the subsequent players, is a very important man in the game if he can place his stones within the circles that surround the *tee*, or in familiar parlance, 'lie within the house.' Second player's post is not so important; but 'third stone' is a position given usually to an experienced player, as he has frequently to either drive off some dangerous stone belonging to the other side, and himself take its place; or has to guard a stone of his own side, which though in a good position may lie open to the enemy. Thus proceeds with varying fortune this 'roaring game' of give and take, stone after stone being driven along the icy plain, till the skips themselves come to play and so finish the 'end.'

With these preliminary remarks we proceed to our tale.

Snow had fallen long and silently over all the high-lying districts of the south of Scotland. It was an unusually bad year for the sheep-farmers, whose stock was suffering severely from the protracted storm and the snow which enveloped both hill and low-lying pasturage. But while sheep-farmers were thus kept anxiously waiting for fresh weather, curlers were in their glory, as day after day they gathered on the ice and followed up the 'roaring game.'

The century was young, and the particular year of our story was that known and spoken of for long afterwards as the 'bad year.' In these days, there was no free-trade to keep down the price of corn or beef, which during years of bad harvest in Great Britain, or long periods of frost and snow, rose to famine prices, and were all but unprocureable by the poorer classes. Oatmeal at half-a-crown a peck told a sad tale in many a household, and especially on the helpless children—the bairns.

As we have said, curling had been enjoyed to the full; perhaps there had even been a surfeit of it, if the real truth were told. Match after match had been played by parish against parish, and county against county. Rival rinks of choice players belonging to counties such as Peebles had challenged those of the neighbouring counties of Selkirkshire, or even Midlothian. Prizes, consisting of medals or money, had been gained by various enthusiasts; and last though not least, matches for suppers of beef and greens—the true curlers' fare, had been contested, the reckoning to be paid by the losing rinks. The bonedicts too had played the bachelors, and had as usual, beaten them.

County squires had given prizes to be played for by their tenantry versus adjoining tenantry, and had brought their fur-clad wives and daughters to the ice to congratulate them on success, or console with them on defeat. In short, the sole occupation of the majority of the adult male rural population of the south of Scotland in the year of which we speak, seemed to be—curling.

Amongst other matches in the county of Peeblesshire there was one that yet remained to come off, namely between the parishes of Tweedsmuir and Broughton. In a series of matches—or bouspiels as they were termed—between parish and parish, these two had stood unbeaten. It therefore remained to be seen which parish should beat the other, and thereby achieve the envied position of champion of the county.

When the honour of a *parish* is at stake on the ice, the choice of the men who are to play, is a matter of very grave import. In a friendly match between two rinks, a little unskilfulness on the part of one or more of the players is a very common affair and is comparatively unheeded; but in a bouspiel between the two best parishes in a celebrated curling county, the failure or even the occasional uncertainty of any one man may be fraught with direst consequences.

Foremost among the promoters of the forthcoming match which was to decide matters, were Robert Scott laird of Tweedsmuir, and Andrew Murray laird of Broughton. These worthies had long been rivals on other than ice-fields, and though on friendly enough terms at kirk or market

were each keenly alive to his own honour and prowess. Any game, therefore, in which these rival lairds engaged, was sure to be closely contested; and the result was at all times as eagerly watched by interested spectators as it was keenly fought by the rival parties. It is even said that the lairds had been rivals in love as well as in other sports, the result of which was that Murray had carried off the lady and Scott had remained a bachelor, with an old housekeeper named Betty to take charge of him. But as the story of the love-match was but the 'clash' of the country, it may be taken for what it is worth.

On the morning of the day fixed for the match (which was to come off at Broughton and to consist of four men on each side), the laird of Tweedsmuir was early astir, in order to see that the cart which was to convey his own curling-stones and those of his men to Broughton—a distance of some half-dozen miles—was ready, and that the men themselves were prepared to accompany it. The cart having been duly despatched with the schoolmaster of the parish, who was to be one of the players, and the shepherd from Talla Linns, who was to be another, Laird Scott ordered out his gig and himself prepared to start.

'Now Betty,' cried the laird to his old housekeeper, as he proceeded to envelop himself in his plaid, 'you'll see and have plenty of beef and greens ready by six o'clock, and a spare bed or two; for besides our own men it's likely enough I may bring back one or two of the beaten lads to stop all night.'

'Deed laird, tak ye care the Broughton folk dinna get the better o' you, and tak ye after a'; they tell me they're grand curlers.'

'Well Betty, I'm not afraid of them, with Andrew Denholm on my side.'

Thus assured, the stalwart laird seized the reins and took the road for Broughton. On his way down the valley of the Tweed he called at the humble cottage of the said Andrew Denholm, who usually played the critical part of 'third stone,' and was one of his best supporters; and whose employment, that of a mason, was for the nonce at a stand-still.

'What! not ready yet Andrew?' exclaimed the laird in a tone of disappointment. 'Bestir yourself man, or we'll not be on the ice by ten o'clock.'

'I'm no' gann' to the curlin' the day sir,' replied Andrew with an air of dejection.

'And what for no'?' inquired the laird with uneasy apprehension. 'You know Andrew, my man, the game canna' go on without you. The honour of Tweedsmuir at stake too! there's not another man I would risk in your place on the ice this day.'

'Get Wattie Laidlaw the weaver to tak' my place laird; he's a grand curler, and can play up a stane as well as any man in the parish; the fact is sir, just now I have na' the heart even to curl. Gang yer ways yersell laird, and skip against the laird o' Broughton, and there's nae fear o' the result: and Wattie can play third stane instead o' me.'

'Wattie will play nae third stane for me: come yourself Andrew, and we'll try to cheer you up; and you'll take your beef and greens up bye wi' the rink callants and me in the afternoon.'

Denholm was considered one of the best curlers

in that part of the county, and was usually one of the first to be on the ice; to see him, therefore, thus cast down and listless, filled the laird's warm heart with sorrow. He saw there was something wrong. He must rally the dejected mason.

'Do you think,' continued the laird, 'that I would trust Wattie to play in your place; a poor silly body that can barely get to the hog-score, let alone the tee? Na, na Andrew; rather let the match be off than be beaten in that way.'

Seeing the laird thus determined to carry off his 'third man' to the scene of the approaching conflict, the poor mason endeavoured still further to remonstrate by a recital of his grievances.

'Ye ken sir,' he began, 'what a long storm it has been. Six weeks since I've had a day at my trade, though I have made a shilling or two now and again up-bye at the homestead yonder. But wi' the price o' meal at half-a-crown the peck, and no' very good after a'; and nineteenpence for a loaf of bread, we've had a sair time of it. But we wadna' vex ourselves about that, Maggie and me, if we had meal enough to keep the bairns fed. Five o' them dwining away before our eyes; it's been an unco job I assure you, laird. Indeed if it hadna been for Mag's sister that's married upon the grievance o' Drummelzier, dear knows what would have become of us, wi' whiles no a haundfu' o' meal left in the gimmel. Even wi' the siller to pay for it, it's no' aye to be gotten; and,' faltered the poor fellow in conclusion, 'there's just meal enough in the house to-day to last till the morn.'

'Well, cheer up my man!' cried the laird; 'the longest day has an end, and this storm cannot last much longer. In fact there's a thaw coming on or I'm far cheated. There's a crown to Maggie to replenish the meal-ark, and get maybe a sup o' something better for the bairns. And there's cheese an' bread in the gig here that will serve you and me Andrew, till the beef and greens are ready for us up-bye in the afternoon. Meanwhile, a tastin' o' the flask will no be amiss, and then for Broughton.'

Thus invigorated and reassured, the mason took his seat beside the laird, and amid blessings from the gudewife and well-wishings from the bairns, the two sped on their journey.

Arrived at the pond, they found tees marked, distances measured, and all in readiness for the play to begin. The usual salutations ensued. Broughton and Tweedsmuir shook hands all round with much apparent warmth; and the two sides, of four each, took their places in the following order:

BROUGHTON.	TWEEDSMUIR.
Wil. Elliot, shoemaker, lead;	Mr Henderson, school-master, lead;
Rev. Isaac Stevenson, 2d stone;	Wattie Dalgleish, shepherd, 2d stone;
Tam Johnston, blacksmith, 3d stone;	Andrew Denholm, mason, 3d stone;
Laird Murray, skip.	Laird Scott, skip.

The play was begun and continued with varying fortune: sometimes one side scored, sometimes the other. The match was to consist of thirty-one points; and at one o'clock when a halt was called for refreshments, the scoring was tolerably even.

The frost was beginning to shew a slight tendency to give way, but this only nerved the players to further exertions in sweeping up the stones on the somewhat dulled ice. The scene in the forenoon had been a very lively one: but as the afternoon approached and the game was nearing an end, the liveliness was tempered with anxiety, which amounted almost to pain, as shot after shot was 'put in' by one side, only to be cleverly 'taken' by the other. 'Soop! soop!' was the incessant cry of the skips as from their point of vantage they descried a lagging stone; or 'Hand up! I tell ye; hand up!' when from that same point they beheld one of their players' stones approaching with sufficient velocity to do all that was wanted. Anxiety was nearing a crisis. At half-past three the game stood: Broughton thirty, Tweedsmuir twenty-nine. The game was anybody's. Coats had been cast as needless encumbrances; bosoms were clutched with determined firmness: the skips slightly pale with the terrible excitement of the occasion, and the stake that was as it were hanging in the balance: want of nerve on their part to direct, or on the part of any one man to play, might decide the fate of the day. The last end had come to be played, and Broughton having won the previous end, was to lead. The shoemaker's stone is played, and lies well over the hog-score in good line with the tee, and on the road to promotion. Tweedsmuir's leading man, the schoolmaster, passes the souter's stone and lies in 'the house.' 'Well played dominie!' cries Laird Scott to his lead. And so proceeds the 'end' till it comes to our friend the mason's turn to play; the blacksmith having just played his first stone with but indifferent effect.

'What do ye see o' that stane Andrew?' roars Laird Scott from the tee, pointing at the same time to the winning stone of the other side, which, however, was partially 'guarded.'

'I see the half o' t'.

'Then,' says the laird, 'make sure of it: tak it awa', and if you rub off the guard there's no harm done.'

For a moment the mason steadies himself, settles his foot in the crumple, and with a straight delivered shot shaves the guard and wicks out the rival stone, himself lying in close to the tee, and *guarded* both at the side and in front by stones belonging to his side.

The effect of such a shot as this, at so critical a period of the game, was electric, and is not easily to be described. Enthusiasm on the part of Tweedsmuir, dismay on that of Broughton. But there are yet several stones to come: the order may again be reversed, and Andrew's deftly played shot may be yet taken. We shall see. The blacksmith, the third player on the Broughton side, follows with his second stone, and though by adhering to the direction of his skip he might have knocked off the guard and so laid open Andrew's winner, over-anxiety causes him to miss the guard and miss everything. Thus is his second and last stone unfortunately played for Broughton.

The mason has his second stone still to play for Tweedsmuir, and before doing so Laird Scott thus accosts him: 'Andrew my man, we are lying shot now; we want but another to be game; and for the honour o' Tweedsmuir I am going to give you the shot that will give it to us: do ye

see this port?' pointing to an open part of the ice (in curling phraseology a port) to the left of the tee, with a stone on each side.

'I see the port sir.'

'Well then,' continued the laird, 'I want you to fill that port; lay a stone there Andrew, and there's a lads o' meal at your door to-morrow morning.'

The stone is raised just for one instant with an easy backward sweep of hand and arm, and delivered with a twist that curls it on and on by degrees towards the spot required. Not just with sufficient strength, perhaps, but aligned to the point. In an instant the skip is master of the situation. 'Soop lads! O soop! soop her up—s-o-o-o-p—there now; let her lie!' as the stone curls into the 'port,' and lies a provoking impediment to the opposite players. The pressure on players of both sides is now too great to admit of many outward demonstrations. Stern rigour of muscle stiffens every face as the two skips themselves now leave the tee and take their places at the other end. The silence bodes a something that no one cares to explain away, so great is the strain of half-hope half-fear that animates every breast.

Laird Murray is directed by his adviser at the tee (the blacksmith) to break-off the guard in front, but misses. Scott's antagonist, by a skillfully played stone, puts on another guard still, in order to avoid danger from Laird Murray's second and last stone. One chance only now apparently remains for the laird of Broughton, who requires but one shot to reverse the order of things and retrieve the game, and he tries it. It is one of those very difficult shots known amongst curlers as an outwick. A stone of his side has lain considerably to the right of the tee short of it, which if touched on the outer side might be driven in towards the centre and perhaps lie shot. The invick would be easier, but that the stone is unfortunately guarded for that attempt. He knows that Denholm's first stone still lies the shot, and is guarded both in front and at the side; and that with another, Tweedsmuir will be thirty-one and game. The shot is risked—after other contingencies have been duly weighed—but without the desired effect: the outlying stone is certainly touched, which in itself was a good shot, but is not sufficiently taken on the side to produce the desired effect. The laird of Broughton pales visibly as the shot is missed, and mutters something between his clenched teeth anything but complimentary to things in general.

The last stone now lies by the foot of our Tweedsmuir laird, who calmly awaits the word of direction from Andrew at the other end.

'Laird!' shouts the anxious mason, 'there's but the one thing for it, and I've seen ye play a duffers-like shot. What would ye say to try an invick aff my last stane and lift this one a foot?' pointing to a stone of his side which lay near, though still not counting; 'that would give us another shot, and the game!'

'Well Andrew, that's why I asked you to fill the port, for I saw what *they* didna see, that a wick and curl-in would be left: I think it may be done. At anyrate I can but try.'

Silence reigns o'er the rink: the sweepers on each side stand in breathless suspense: the wick taken, as given by Andrew in advice to the laird,

may proclaim Bronghton beaten and Tweedsmuir the champion parish of the county!

'Stand back from behind, and shew me the stone with your besom, Andrew; there.'

The suspense is soon broken, the last stone has sped on its mission, the wick has been taken, a stone on Laird Scott's side that was lying farther from the tee than one of the opponents, is 'lifted' into second place, which with the mason's winner makes exactly the magic score of thirty-one! Like the thaw which after this long-continued storm will be welcomed by man and beast alike, so does the thaw now melt the frozen tongues of the players. Hats fly up in frenzy of delight, and the phenomenon is witnessed (only to be witnessed on ice) of a Scottish laird and his humble tenant in ecstatic embrace. Flasks are produced, hands shaken by rivals as well as by friends—though chiefly by friends: preparations are made to carry home the paraphernalia of the roaring game; and while Betty congratulates the laird and his guests on their victory, there is happiness in store for Andrew Denholm, whose prowess so notably contributed to secure the honour of Tweedsmuir.

AN IRISH COUNTRY FUNERAL.

THE difference between English and Irish as regards the funeral customs of the peasantry in both countries is great. To have a large assemblage at the 'berrin' is among the latter an object of ambition and pride to the family; and the concourse of neighbours, friends, and acquaintances who flock from all parts to the funeral is often immense. Even strangers will swell the funeral cortege, and will account for doing so by saying: 'Sure, won't it come to our turn some day, and isn't a big following—to do us credit at our latter end—what we'd all like? So why shouldn't we do what is decent and neighbourly by one another?'

What a contrast there is between a quiet interment in an English country parish, attended only by the household of the departed, and the well-remembered scenes in the churchyard of Kilkeedy, County Limerick!

Here, in days gone by, a funeral was a picturesque and touching sight. There was something very weird and solemn in the sound of the 'keen,' as it came, mournful and wild upon the ear, rising and falling with the windings of the road along which the vast procession moved. In the centre was the coffin, borne on the shoulders of relatives or friends, and followed by the next of kin. Outside the churchyard gate, where was a large open space, there was a halt. The coffin was laid reverently on the ground, the immediate relatives of the dead kneeling round it.

And now on bended knees all in that vast assemblage sink down. Every head is bowed in prayer—the men devoutly uncovered—every lip moves; the wail of the keeners is hushed; you could hear a pin drop among the silent crowds. It is a solemn and impressive pause. After a few minutes the bearers again take up their burden and carry it into the churchyard, when after being three times borne round the church, it is committed to its final resting-place.

Years have passed since these scenes were witnessed by the writer of these pages. The old

familiar church has been pulled down (a new one built on a neighbouring site), and nought of it remains but the ivy-clad tower and graceful spire left standing—that 'ivy-mantled tower,' where the sparrow had found her a house and the swallow a nest; whose green depths in the still eventide were made vocal by the chirpings and chattering of its feathered inhabitants—the sparrows fluttering fassily in and out, and after the manner of their kind, closing the day in noisy gossip before subsiding into rest and silence. Here too were to be found owls, curiously light—soft masses of feathers with apparently no bodies to speak of, who captured by the workmen while clipping the ivy, were brought up, all dazed-looking and sleepy, to be admired and wondered at by the rectory children, and finally restored tenderly to their 'secret bower!'

A funeral scene similar to that just described forms the subject of one of the illustrations in Lady Chatterton's *Rambles in the South of Ireland*, sketched by herself. She had stopped to make a drawing of the beautiful ruins of Quin Abbey in the County Clare, when the wail of an approaching funeral came floating on the breeze, and the melancholy cadence was soon followed by the appearance of the usual concourse of country people. Their figures scattered about in groups, and the coffin in the foreground, enter with very picturesque effect into the sketch.

When the funeral is over, those who have attended it disperse through the churchyard; and any having friends buried there betake themselves to their graves to pray and weep over them. The wild bursts of grief and vehement sobbing, even over moss-grown graves whose time-stained headstones bear witness to the length of time their occupants have slept beneath, would surprise those who are unfamiliar with the impulsive and demonstrative Irish nature.

An old man sitting beside a grave was rocking himself to and fro, and wiping his eyes with a blue cotton handkerchief, while, rosary in hand, he prayed with extraordinary fervour.

'It's my poor old wife is lying here,' he said; 'the heavens be her bed! God rest her soul this day! Many's the long year since she wint from me, poor Norry, and left me sore and lonesome! She was well on in years then, though the childer were young; for we were married a long time before there was any. The neighbours were all at me to marry again, if it was only for one to wash the shirt or knit the stocking for me, or to keep the weenochs from running wild about the roads while I was away at my work earning their bit. But I couldn't give in to the notion. I was used to my poor Norry, and the thoughts of a stranger on the floor was bitter to my heart. Ah, it's a sore loss to a man in years when his old wife is took from him! The old comrade he's had so long; that understands every turn of him, and knows his humours and his fancies; and fits him as easy and comfortable as an old shoe. A man might get a new one—and maybe more sightly to look at than the one that's gone—but dear knows, 'twould be at his peril! As likely as not, she'd fret him and heart-scald him, and make him uneasy day and night, just blistering like new leather! The old wife is like the shoe he's used to, that will lie into his foot. Stretching here and giving there, and coming, by constant wearing, to fit, as easy and souple as

the skin itself, into th' exactness of every bump and contrary spot! For there's none of us,' continued the old man, who seemed to be a bit of a moralist, 'that hasn't our tender places and our corns and oddities in body and mind. God help us! Some more and some less, according. And there's no one can know where then raw spots lie, or how to save 'em from being hurt, like the loving cutnith that's been next us through the long years, in rain and shine. So yer honours,' he added, getting up with a last sorrowful look at his wife's grave, 'I wouldn't hearken to the neighbours, and take a strange comrade. And after a while a widow sister o' mine came to live with me and to care my poor orphans; but my heart is still with my poor Norry here in the clay!'

There was another loving couple in the same neighbourhood, whose apparently impending separation by death caused much sympathy among their friends. The man was a farmer, and owing to his industry and good conduct, he and his young wife were in comfortable circumstances and well to do. They were devoted to each other. When he was attacked with the severe illness that threatened his life, she nursed him night and day until she was wasted to a shadow, and looked from anxiety and want of sleep almost as corpse-like as he did. Her misery when the doctors pronounced the case hopeless was dreadful to witness. The poor fellow's strength was, they said, nearly exhausted, his illness had lasted so long; so that his holding out was considered impossible. Things were in this state, and the sufferer's death daily expected, when we were called away from the place, to pay a distant visit. On our return home after some weeks' absence, one of the first persons we saw was young Mrs D—— dressed in the deepest widow's weeds—a moving mass of crape.

It was on a Sunday morning going to church; she was walking along the road before us, stepping out with wonderful briskness, we thought, considering her very recent bereavement. We had to quicken our pace to come up with her, and said when we did so: 'We are so sorry for you, so very sorry! You have lost your husband!'

'Thank you kindly; you were always good,' she said, lifting up her heavy crape veil from off a face radiant with smiles. 'He isn't dead at all, glory be to God! an' 'tis recovering beautiful he is. The doctor says if he goes on gettin' up his strength as he's doing the last fortnight, he'll soon be finely; out and about in no time.—Oh, the clothes, is it? Sure 'twas himself, the dear man, bought them for me! When he was that had there wasn't a spark of hope, he calls me over to him, an' "Katie my heart," sez he, "I'm going from you. The doctors have gave me up, and you'll be a lone widow before long, my poor child. And when I'm gone, jewel, and you're left without a head or provider, there'll be no one in the wide world to give you a stitch of clothes or anything comfortable. So I'll order them home now, darlin', the best that can be got for money; for I'd like to leave you decent and respectable behind me." And your honours,' she went on, 'so he did. Two golden guineas he gev for the bonnet; and as for the gown, ladies dear, only feel the stuff that's in it, and ye may guess what that cost. And beautiful crape, no end of a price!

—every whole thing the height of good quality—top lot of the shop, and no stint.—Well,' she continued, 'there they all were in the chest. And sure when himself got well we thought it a sin and a shame to let lovely clothes like those lie by without wearing 'em—to be ruined entirely and feed the moths—after they costing such a sight of money too. So he made me put them on; and a proud man himself was this morning, and a happy, seeing me go out the door so grand and elegant—the best of everything upon me!'

There was something absurd, almost grotesque, in the self-conscious complacent way in which the young woman gazed admiringly down on her lugubrious finery; tripping off exulting and triumphant, her manner in curious contrast with the sore woe associated with those garments—the saddest in which mortal can be clad.

MR ASLATT'S WARD.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.

I WILL pass over the misery of the days that followed; days stretched by anxiety and suspense to double their ordinary length. The woman succeeded only too well in proving the truth of her story; and knowing how useless it would be, Mr Hammond did not endeavour to deny that she was his wife. Nor did he endeavour to justify his conduct, which was truly inexcusable. Yet in after-years, when our indignation had cooled, and we were able calmly to reflect upon the history thus revealed, we could not help pitying the unfortunate young man. He had not been much past twenty when, on a visit to Wiesbaden, he had made the acquaintance of a woman several years older than himself, whose brilliant beauty and fascinating address had fairly bewitched him. She was a gay adventress, who, living by the chances of the gaming-table, and tired of such a precarious livelihood, had fostered the young man's passion, and then condescended to marry him.

Alas! Frederick Hammond had not been long married before he bitterly regretted the step he had taken. His wife proved the bane of his life. She had contracted the habit of drinking to excess, and her intemperance destroyed all hope of happiness in domestic life. Her husband's love changed to hatred, and unable to control her vicious propensities, he deserted her. In one place after another he took refuge, hoping to elude her search; but again and again she succeeded in tracking him to his place of concealment, though she was willing to leave him to himself when he had satisfied her demand for money. But at last for a long time he heard nothing of her; and as the months passed into years, the hope sprang up within him that his wife was either dead, or else had lost all clue to his whereabouts. Weary of residing abroad, he returned to England, and finding it difficult to obtain other employment, was glad to accept the post of village schoolmaster, for he thought the little country village might prove a secure hiding-place. And here becoming acquainted with Miss Sinclair, he basely yielded to the temptation to act as though the hope he cherished that his wife was dead were already a realised fact. He dared not openly ask Rose's hand of her guardian; but he sought by all the means in his power to win

her love, and did not rest till he had won from her a response to his avowed affection, and gained her consent to a secret engagement. It was a cruel selfish proceeding, for which his past misfortunes offered no excuse; and thankful indeed were we that his scheme of eloping with Rose had been frustrated.

But poor Rose! Bitter indeed was her distress when she found we had no comfort to give her. The shock was too great for her physical strength, and ere many hours had elapsed it was evident that a severe illness would be the consequence. For days she lay tossing in feverish delirium; whilst we kept anxious watch by her bedside, much fearing what the issue might be. But our fears were mercifully disappointed; the fever turned, and soon the much-loved patient was pronounced out of danger. But the improvement was very gradual, and after a while almost imperceptible. Extreme exhaustion was accompanied in Rose's case by an apathetic indifference to everything around her, which formed the chief barrier to her recovery. She felt no desire to get strong again, now that life had no longer any great attraction for her.

'If we could only rouse her to take an interest in anything, she would soon be well,' the doctor said to me one day.

A possibility of doing so occurred to me at that moment, and I resolved to try, though I could scarcely hope to succeed. In the evening, when I was sitting by Rose's couch, and knew that Mr Aslatt had gone out, and would not be back for an hour or two, I said to her gently: 'I think you feel a little stronger to-day; do you not, darling?'

A heavy sigh was the only response to my question.

I knelt by her side, and gently drew her head upon my shoulder as I whispered: 'I wish you could unburden your heart to me, dear Rose. Would it not be a relief to tell me the sad thoughts that occupy your mind?'

No answer but by tears, which I was glad to see, for I knew they would relieve her heavy heart. After a while, words followed. She told me how little she cared to get well again; what a dreary blank life appeared to her, now that he whom she had so loved and trusted had proved unworthy; how it seemed to her she was of no use in the world, and the sooner she were out of it the better for herself and every one else. And a great deal more in the same strain.

I reminded her of her guardian's love for her, and his great anxiety for her recovery, and urged her to try to get well for his sake. But she only shook her head despondingly. 'I have never been anything but a trouble to him,' she said; 'he would be happier without me. If I were out of the way, I daresay he would marry. I used to make plans for his future as well as for my own, you know; but now everything will be different.'

'I do not think Mr Aslatt would have married,' I ventured to say.

'Why not?' asked Rose.

'I was silent, and she did not repeat the question.

'I have a story to tell you, Rose, which I think you may like to hear,' I said presently.

'A story!' she said in surprise.

'Yes, darling, a story.'

'Many years ago, a gentleman was passing through the streets of Vienna. He was a man about thirty years of age, but he looked older, for he had known sorrow and disappointment, and life appeared to him then nought but vanity and vexation of spirit. Yet many would have envied his position, for he possessed much of what the world most values. He was walking listlessly along, when his attention was attracted by a group of musicians, who were performing at the corner of a square. In the centre of the band stood a pretty little fair-haired girl about six years old. She was poorly clad. Her tiny feet were bare, and bleeding from contact with the sharp stones with which the roads were strewn; and tears were in her large blue eyes as, in her childish voice, she joined in the song. Her pretty yet sorrowful face and the plaintive tone in which she sang touched the stranger's kind heart. He stood still to watch the group, and when the song was ended went forward to place some money in the child's upturned palm. "Is this your little girl?" he asked the man by whose side she was standing. He replied in the negative. The little girl was an orphan, the child of an Englishman, who had formerly belonged to the band, but who had died some months before, leaving his little daughter entirely dependent on the good-will of his late comrades.

'Well, darling, you must know that they did not object to keeping her with them, as her appearance was calculated to call forth pity, and thus increase their earnings. But it was a rough life for the child, and she suffered from the exposure to all weathers which it entailed. Her father, who it was believed had seen better days, had never allowed her to go out with the troop, and had done his utmost to shield her from hardships. But now there was no help for it; she could not be kept in idleness. Moved with pity for the child's hapless lot, the gentleman inquired where the musicians resided, and returned to his hotel to consider how he might best serve the little orphan. After much reflection his resolution was taken. He was a lonely man, with no near relative to claim his love. His heart yearned with pity for the desolate child, whose pleading blue eyes and plaintive voice kept appealing to his compassion, to the exclusion of all other considerations. He determined to adopt her, and provide for her for the rest of her life. With this intention he sought the street musicians on the following day, and easily induced them to commit the child to his care. After handsomely rewarding the musicians, he took her away with him that very day, and ever since she has had the first place in his heart. His loving care for the orphan child brought its own reward, for in striving to promote the happiness of little Rose he found his own.'

'I was interrupted by a cry from my companion. "Rose!" she exclaimed excitedly. "What are you saying, Miss Bygrave? Tell me—was I—am I that little child?"

'You are, darling; and now you know how truly you are the light of Mr Aslatt's life. He has no one to care for but you, and you alone can make him happy.'

'And I have really no claim upon him, an in no way related to him, as I thought! I knew I

owed him much, but I had no idea to what extent I was indebted to him. But for his goodness, what should I be now? Oh, if I had only known this before! How ungrateful I have been to him, how wayward and perverse! Oh, Miss Bygrave, I cannot bear to think of it!

'Do not trouble about that, dear,' I said, trying to soothe her, for her agitation alarmed me; 'it is all forgiven and forgotten by Mr Aslatt.'

'But I shall never forgive myself,' she exclaimed passionately. 'To think that I have been receiving everything from him for years, living upon his bounty, and yet making no return, evincing no gratitude, taking all his kindness as a matter of course, just because I imagined I was dear to him for my parents' sake!'

'Nay; you are too hard upon yourself, dear Rose,' I said gently. 'To a certain extent you have been grateful to him; you have again and again acknowledged to me your sense of his goodness; and now that you know all, you will clearly *prove* your gratitude, I have no doubt.'

'But how?' exclaimed Rose. 'How can I express—how can I shew my deep sense of all that I owe him?'

'In the first place, by getting well as soon as possible, and by letting him see that you once more take an interest in life. For his sake, I know you will strive to bear bravely a trial, the bitterness of which he fully appreciates. And Rose, I must beg you not to attempt to express to Mr Aslatt your sense of indebtedness. He feels a morbid shrinking from hearing such words from your lips, and has implored me—in case I ever revealed to you the secret of your early life, as I have been led to do this evening—to assure you that you are under no great obligation to him, for he considers that he has been fully repaid for what he has done for you, by the happiness your companionship has given him.'

'But I cannot bear to go on receiving so much from him, and yet give no expression to my gratitude,' said Rose.

'You cannot do otherwise,' I replied; 'unless you wish to make him very unhappy, and that would be a poor return for all his goodness. Do all you can to please him; be as bright and cheerful as possible; but do not, I beseech you, let him see that you labour under a sense of painful obligation to him.'

'I will act as you desire,' said Rose. 'But is there really no other way in which I can prove my gratitude?'

'Not at present,' I replied. 'But perhaps at some future time you may be able to give him what he will consider worth far more than all he has ever bestowed upon you; but it would not be acceptable to him if it proceeded only from the promptings of gratitude.'

'I do not understand you,' said Rose, though her cheek flushed.

'Perhaps you may some day,' I answered. 'But now, darling, you must be still, and not talk any more, else I am afraid you will not be so well to-morrow.'

I had hard work to persuade her to be quiet, and though after a time she refrained from talking in obedience to my repeated injunctions, I could see her thoughts were dwelling on the communication I had made to her. Only good results, however, followed from the excitement of that

evening. There was a tinge of pink on Rose's delicate cheek the next day; her countenance was brighter, and her manner more animated than we had seen it for some time. Mr Aslatt was delighted at the change, and encouraged by it, he began to talk to Rose of the plans he had formed for taking her to Italy as soon as she felt strong enough to travel. He was overjoyed to find that she made no objection to his proposal, but even entered cheerfully into his plans, and declared that she should be quite ready to start in the course of a few weeks. And so it proved, for she gained strength with a rapidity which showed the truth of the doctor's words, that she only needed to be roused in order to get well.

We started for the continent at the end of October. It was thought that residence abroad during the winter months would promote Rose's restoration to health, and afford that diversion of mind which was so desirable after the trying experience she had passed through. The result was most satisfactory. There was no return of the apathetic melancholy which had been so distressing to witness; and her enjoyment of the various entertainments her kind friend provided for her was unassumed. I began to hope that, after all, her attachment to Mr Hammond had not been very deep, but merely a romantic fancy, kindled by the thought of his misfortunes, and fanned into a flame by the breath of opposition. A thousand little incidents strengthened this conviction of mine. Every day it became evident that Rose was learning to appreciate her guardian's character more highly than she had done before. She took a growing delight in his society, and indeed never seemed quite at ease if he were absent.

When in the spring we returned to England, Rose's health and spirits had so completely returned, that she appeared little different from the radiant girl whose loveliness had charmed me when I first looked at her, save that her manner was gentler, being marked by a winning humility and patience which her former bearing had lacked.

I did not long remain at Westwood Hall in the capacity of Rose's companion, though I have frequently visited it since as her friend. One day soon after our return from Italy, she came to me with a bright and blushing countenance, and whispered that she had a secret to tell me. I had little doubt what the secret was, and could therefore help Rose out with her confession, that Mr Aslatt had asked her to be his wife, and that she had consented, though with some reluctance, caused by a sense of her unworthiness.

'I could not do otherwise,' she said, 'when he told me that the happiness of his future life depended upon my answer; though I know how little I deserve the love he bestows upon me.'

'But Rose,' I said, anxious to be relieved of a painful doubt, 'you have not, I trust, been led to a decision contrary to the dictates of your heart? You know nothing would be further from Mr Aslatt's desire than that you should sacrifice your own inclinations from a mistaken notion of his claims upon you. He would not be happy if he thought you had only consented that you might not make him unhappy, and not because your own happiness would be promoted by the union.'

'I know that,' murmured Rose, as her cheek took a deeper tint; 'but it is not so. I feel very

differently towards Mr Aslatt from what I did when you first knew me. I think him the best and noblest of men, and I shall be proud and happy to be his wife; only I wish I were more worthy of him. O Miss Bygrave! I cannot tell you how ashamed I feel, when I think of the infatuation which led me to deceive so kind a friend, or how intensely thankful I am that you saved me from a wicked act which would have caused unspeakable misery for us both! I pity poor Mr Hammond, and forgive him for the injury he so nearly inflicted upon me; but I must confess to you that I never really had such confidence in him or cared for him, as I now care for and trust the one whose love I have slighted and undervalued so long.

It only remains to add that shortly after that terrible scene at the Priory, Mr Hammond disappeared, and it was thought, went abroad; but of him and his wretched wife not a scrap of intelligence has ever reached us.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

In a lecture at the Royal Institution, Dr Tyndall has made known the results of a long series of experiments on fog-signals, all involving more or less of noise, and demonstrating that the noisiest are the best. Mariners in a fog are helpless: no lights, no cliffs, no towers can be seen, and they must be warned off the land through their ears. So in conjunction with the Trinity House and the authorities at Woolwich, the Professor fired guns of various kinds and sizes, and very soon found that a short five-and-a-half-inch howitzer with a three-pound charge of powder produced a louder report than an eighteen-pounder with the same weight of charge. Thereupon guns of different forms were constructed, and one among them which had a parabolic muzzle proved to be the best, that is in throwing the sound over the sea, and not wasting it to rearward over the land. Then it was ascertained that fine-grained powder produces a louder report than coarse-grained; the shock imparted to the air being more rapid in the one case than in the other.

Experiments made with gun-cotton shewed conclusively that the cotton was 'loudest of all;' and 'fired in the focus of the reflector, the gun-cotton clearly dominated over all the other sound-producers.' The reports were heard at distances varying from two to thirteen miles and a half.

When the fog clears off, the noisy signals are laid aside and bright lights all round the coast guide the seaman on his way. Some years ago the old oil light was superseded by the magneto-electric light, and this in turn has given place to the dynamo-electric light, which excels all in brilliance and intensity. In this machine the required movements are effected by steam or water power; and when the electric current is thereby generated, it is conducted by wires to a second machine, which co-operates in the work with remarkable economy and efficiency. Readers desirous of knowing the improvements made in the dynamo-electric machines by Messrs Siemens, and the experiments carried on in lighthouses, should refer to the *Proceedings* of the Institution of Civil Engineers for the present session.

Particulars of a galvanic battery of extraordinary

power have been brought to this country from the United States. Instead of the carbon plate commonly used as one of the elements in the cells, it has a copper plate coated with lead and platinum; and a blowing apparatus is so combined that a stream of air can be blown through the acid liquid with which the cells are filled. The effects of this aeration are remarkable: the galvanic current is rendered unusually powerful, and a large amount of heat is developed. The way in which these effects are produced is not yet satisfactorily made out; but that this battery offers a new and potent means of investigation to chemists and physicists cannot be doubted.

An account of an exclusively metallic cell has been given to the Royal Society by Professors Ayrton and Perry of the Engineering College, Tokio, Japan, in a paper on 'Contact Theory of Voltaic Action.' They took strips of platinum and magnesium, which were in connection with the electrodes of the electrometer, and dipped them into mercury, and immediately saw evidence of a strong current. The experiments were continued with much care until the Professors felt assured that 'the electro-motive force obtained was about one and a half times the electro-motive force of a Daniell's cell. 'It may be possible,' they remark further, 'by mechanical or other means, or by using another metal than magnesium, to give constancy to this arrangement; and as its internal resistance is extremely small, the cell may be of great practical use for the production of powerful currents.'

In a discussion about Iron at the meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute, one of the speakers shewed that it was not so much quality of metal as mechanical structure that constituted good iron. He took certain railway bars and planed them, whereby he was enabled to examine their structure, and he saw that some of the rails contained much cinder, which accounted for their showing more signs of wear than others. On sifting the shavings and passing a magnet over them, all the iron could be taken out and the quantity of cinder ascertained; and not until this cinder could be thoroughly got rid of would the manufacturer be able to produce good iron. The same defect had been noticed in Swedish iron made for a special purpose; and there was reason to fear that manufacturers made more haste to send iron into the market than to produce the best quality. Fortunately, a few scientific men have introduced improvements which will in time abolish the rule of thumb that has too long prevailed.

The manufacture of bricks from slag is still carried on at the Tees Iron-works, Middlesbrough, by machines constructed for the purpose. The slag, ground into sand, is mixed with lime, squeezed into moulds, and each machine turns out about ten thousand bricks a day. Being pressed, these bricks present advantages over ordinary bricks: they are uniform in size and thickness; do not break; occasion less trouble to the bricklayer and plasterer; require less mortar; and do not split when nails are driven into them, whereby carpenters are saved the work of plugging. Another important fact, which the labourers will appreciate, is that the weight of a thousand slag bricks is one ton less than the weight of a thousand red bricks; and as regards durability, we are informed that the longer they are kept the harder they become.

An invention which simplifies photography out of doors may be said to have claims on the attention of tourists and travellers, as well as of professional photographers. To carry the bottles, liquids, and other appliances at present required necessitates troublesome baggage; but Mr Chardon of Paris shews that all this may be avoided by the use of his 'Dry bromide of silver emulsion.' This preparation, a mixture of colloid and the bromide, will keep an indefinite time in bottles excluded from the light, and does not suffer from varying temperatures. Specimens carried to China, and back by way of the Red Sea, underwent no alteration; an important consideration for travellers and astronomers who wish to take photographs in tropical countries. When required for use the bromide is mixed in certain proportions with ether and alcohol; the plates are coated with this solution, and as soon as dry are ready for the photographer. They require no further preparation, and retain their sensibility through many months. The image may be developed immediately or after some weeks, according to circumstances; in proof of which photographs taken at Aden have been developed in Paris. But a very small quantity of water is necessary, and the image may be transferred to a film of gelatine or a sheet of paper at pleasure, which lessens the risk of breakage, and the plates may be used for fresh pictures.

An account has been published of the disturbance and destruction which the telegraph lines in Germany underwent during the widespread storm one night in March 1876. The destruction was so very great, that had the storm occurred during a political crisis or a war, the consequences might have been much more calamitous. This liability to derangement has in nearly all countries led practical minds to conclude that underground telegraphs are preferable to lines carried on posts through the air; and the German government have laid underground wires from Berlin to Mainz (Mayence), a distance of about three hundred and eighty miles, which will afford excellent means for comparing the two systems.

Vast as are the forests of the United States, Americans are finding out that they are not inexhaustible. The annual product of 'lumber,' which means timber in all its forms, is estimated at ten thousand million feet, a quantity sufficient to make a perceptible gap in the broadest of forests. Among the heaviest items of consumption are the railways with their eighty thousand miles of sleepers, to say nothing of ties, bridges, platforms, and fences. The average 'life' of the wood when laid in the ground is from four to six years; and each year's renewal is said to use up one-sixth of the enormous product above mentioned. These facts have led some thinking constructors to reconsider the national objection to precautions, and they now advocate the use of preserved timber, and have invented a method of preservation. The principal part of the apparatus is a large air-tight iron cylinder one hundred feet long, into which the wood is run on rails; all the openings are closed; steam at a high temperature is forced in, and the process is maintained until every part of the wood is heated up to two hundred and twelve degrees. The steam is then driven from the cylinder; heat is applied; then a vacuum is produced, and 'many barrels of sap'

pour from the wood. Creosote oil is then forced into the cylinder. 'Every stick is at once bathed with oil. The wood, being in a soft somewhat spongy condition, the fibres porous, and the pores open, absorbs at once the hot penetrating oil. If the wood be of a porous character like pine, it absorbs all the oil required in the first flow without any pressure; but if the fibre be solid and close and the timber of a layer of wood, a great pressure of from sixty to one hundred and fifty pounds is needed to make the impregnation complete.' This process reminds us of one on a somewhat similar principle which was noticed in this *Journal* for November 25, 1876.

In an address to the Royal Geological Society of Ireland, Sir Robert Kane remarked on the activity prevailing among the geologists and chemists of that country in investigation of their mineral resources. The search for fluorine in rocks has had favourable results; and the discovery of phosphoric acid is regarded as an indication of the extent to which organic remains were included originally in those mineral masses. Certain beds described by geologists as lower Silurian and Cambrian, destitute of fossils, nevertheless contain such traces of phosphorus as shew that they must have been formed in seas rich in organic life. These facts, as Sir R. Kane shewed, are of special interest in Ireland, where, owing to the rareness of those newer formations which furnish the valuable coprolite beds of Cambridge and Suffolk, such sources of agricultural wealth are absent; but where the older strata being so largely developed offer resources for discovery of accumulated organic remains which may be turned to good account in fertilising the soil.

Professor Boyd Dawkins, F.R.S., in discoursing to the Manchester Geological Society, mentioned the discovery of fresh evidence of the antiquity of man. Certain caves in Cresswell Crags, on the borders of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, have been recently explored, and the relics thereby brought to light prove that man lived in the hunter-stage of civilisation in the valley of the Trent and its tributaries, along with the mammoth, woolly rhinoceros, cave-hyena, lion and reindeer, and that he was capable of progress. In the lowest stratum in the caves, says Professor Dawkins, implements are found of the rudest kind and roughest form, made of quartzite pebbles from the neighbourhood. In the middle stratum implements of flint appear mingled with the others; but in the uppermost stratum the tools and implements are of flint, and of the best kind. Among these are bone needles and other appliances of bone and horn, on one of which is rudely engraved a figure of a horse. 'This sequence,' remarks the Professor, 'establishes the fact, that even in the palæolithic age the hunters of reindeer, horse, mammoth, and other creatures were progressive, and that the cave-dwellers of the pleistocene age are to be looked upon from the same point of view as mankind at the present time, as "one man always living and incessantly learning." If Professor Dawkins is right in his conjecture, the cave-dwellers of the very remote period which he describes were somewhat like the Bakimos of the present day.

To this we may add the fact, that rude stone implements have been found in the 'glacial drift' in New Jersey, United States, and that some geologists regard this as proof that man lived on the

earth during that far-back, dreary, and cold glacial period.

In the course of the admirable surveys of their wide-spread territory carried on by authority of the United States government, discovery has been made of strange and interesting remains of habitations, implements, and pottery of a long-departed and forgotten people, who once occupied the region about the head-waters of the San Juan. Photographers and geologists among the surveying parties have by means of pictures, drawings, and descriptions produced a Report, which will in due time be published at Washington. Meanwhile models of the ancient ruins have been constructed in plaster, and compared with the dwellings of certain Indian tribes in New Mexico and Arizona; and these latter, with allowance for contact with Europeans, are at once recognised as bearing traces of the dwellings of the forgotten people. 'Forgotten,' says an American contemporary, 'because the builders of the modern structures are as ignorant of the ancient builders as we are ourselves.'

A correspondent suggests that the 'stencils' produced by Edison's Electric Pen might be used as communications for blind people, whose sensitive fingers would, he thinks, feel out the meaning of the very slight roughness of the surface of the paper occasioned by the punctures. Why does he not try the experiment? Meanwhile we mention that a naturalist in New York has produced a Catalogue of Diatomaceæ by means of the Electric Pen, and published it in quarto form for private distribution.

Another correspondent informs us that the horse-shoe described in the *Month* (July 1877) as brought into use in Philadelphia with satisfactory results, was invented in England in 1870 by Mr C. J. Carr. A statement printed in 1874 sets forth that the shoe is made of malleable iron in such a way 'as to allow of the natural growth of the frog while completely shielding the foot. On the face of the shoe is a hollow semi-circular cavity, which is filled with a pad of hemp and tar; and as no calkins or spikes are required, one of the dangers incident to roughing is entirely obviated.' We wish success to any one who will persevere in applying common-sense and kindness to the shoeing of horses.

The *Japan Daily Herald* of 31st January states that when the telephone was brought under the notice of the Japanese government, Mr Ito, the (native) Minister of Public Works, at once ordered experiments to be made. These were carried out by Mr Gilbert, Telegraph Superintendent-in-chief to the Japanese government, and formerly of Edinburgh. The experiments were so satisfactory that they were followed by the establishment of telephonic communication between the police stations in the metropolis and between the Emperor's palace and the various government departments. When the Public Works Department and the palace were first put in telephonic union, the Emperor and Empress were present, and expressed great surprise at the result. The English newspaper, in recording this fact, adds, 'As well their Majesties might;' and it proceeds to speculate whether the Chinese, who have opposed telegraphs and railways, will 'give ear to the telephone.' No great expectation appears to be entertained that the Chinese will do anything of the kind.

TWO HEARTS.

(Suggested by the picture 'In Memoriam'.)

Is the sunlight, darting, dancing,
Birds amid the green leaves glancing,
Daily sing:
In the balmy air entrancing,
Breathes the Spring.

'Tis the dearest hour of daytime;
In the merry, merry Maytime,
Who'd be sad?
Nature revels in her playtime;
All is glad.

Who is this that cometh slowly?
'Tis a maiden meek and lowly;
In her eyes,
Look of resignation holy

Shadowy lies.
Heeds she not the golden gleaming
Of the sunlight softly streaming
Through the leaves:
Still her soul is darkly dreaming;
Still she grieves.

He her heart to win had striven;
She her heart to him had given;
Hope hath fled—
Heart from heart for aye is riven;
He is dead.

Mid the cruel cannon's rattle,
Passed his soul forth in the battle—
Soul that cried
To Heaven for her from the battle
Ere he died.

On the day when, heavy-hearted,
He had from his love departed
For the fray,
While each heart with sorrow smarted—
On that day

He had left a little token,
That if earthly ties were broken,
On the troo
Tender tie, though all unspoken,
Still might be.
He had carved two hearts united—
Sign of troth and promise blighted;
Sign that they
True will be till death-blighted,
Come what may.

He in each heart—sign that never
Time shall one from other sever—
Graved each name;
Sign that they will be for ever
Still the same.

Daily comes she here to borrow
Short relief from sorrest sorrow,
Partial peace,
Till when on her life's To-morrow
Grief shall cease.

So she dreams of heavenly meeting,
Hears her lost love's tender greeting
Mid the blest,
Where beyond these troubles fleeting,
There is rest.

Hearts which here were disunited,
Hearts whose hopes on earth were blighted,
On that shore
Rest, in perfect peace delighted,
Evermore.

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THE POWER OF DRAW.

WE have on several occasions called attention to the Power of Draw. It is a force which for good as well as for evil pervades the whole social system. Every centre of industry exerts this attractive force by drawing to it large numbers of persons for the sake of employment, and so far the Draw acts beneficially. All our large towns are in no small degree made up of individuals who have drifted thither in the hope of exercising their abilities for their own and the public advantage. This is exactly as it should be. The world is open to everybody. It is only a truism to say that by the Power of Draw the uttermost ends of the earth are peopled.

Unfortunately, this subtle power in its pervading energy is not limited to the industrious and well-disposed. It is acutely demonstrated by all who are looking about for the means of indulging in a life of idleness at the cost of others. The disposition to abstain from useful labour and to depend less or more on gratuitous benefactions, has been largely encouraged by mistaken views of what is ordinarily called charity. The poor—no matter how they happen to be poor—have been extolled as if they were superior beings, to whom all must contribute as one of the noblest of virtues. With perverted notions of this kind, society has for ages done everything in its power to consecrate and encourage poverty, and no wonder it has attained to stupendous dimensions. Early injunctions to give all to the poor were followed by the piously inconsiderate and wide-sweeping benefactions of the monasteries. These in their turn were followed by the statutory obligations of the poor-laws. And now there is superadded a system of voluntary contribution so extensive and varied as to dominate the soundest principles of political economy, and which in its general working amounts to a kind of communism. By every large city, arrangements are organised to succour every human need and infirmity. Those who do not find it agreeable to work will be fed—the feeding, perhaps, not being what all would like, but pretty well as a make-shift.

For every species of ailment, from a broken leg to diseased lungs, there is adequate provision. The cultivation of thrift and self-respect not to be thought of. Bad as things seem to have been in the palmy days of the monasteries, they are now in some quarters ten times worse. While one set of people are slaving between death and life, another set, determined to take their ease, keep hovering on the verge of that agreeable category the poor, and so contrive to lead a jolly sort of existence.

Not that the so-called poor profess to be pure idlers. For decency's sake, they occasionally work a little, and enjoy the commiseration of suffering from the severity of winter, or from the commercial depression arising from 'bad times.' On such occasions the Power of Draw increases in intensity; and now are offered favourable opportunities for tender-hearted individuals to take a lead in establishing soup-kitchens, or benefactions thought to be equally creditable. It is melancholy to consider how at times like these, so little real good is done in comparison with the amount of harm. We see, more particularly as regards the young, the degree of suffering that is presently assuaged, but take no account of the mischief incurred by adding to the general demoralisation. While philanthropists are fondly imagining that they are doing much good, they are very probably adding fresh accumulations to the already overgrown mass of misery and crime. Not more surely do hens run to the heap, than do the thriftless and semi-pauperised instinctively flock towards places where there is an inconsiderately lavish distribution of charity. We never hear of a soup-kitchen being set up, under however careful an administration, without saying: 'There goes a distinct increase to the Power of Draw.'

The injury done by systems of profuse charity has been frequently pointed out, but we have seen nothing so effective and convincing on the subject as a paper read by Mr Bruce at the American Social Science Congress of May 1874, of which a copious abstract is given by a correspondent in *The Times*, of January 24, 1876.

present year. We think it may serve a good purpose to present our readers with a few facts from this interesting paper.

Referring to a serious depression in trade which threw large numbers of persons out of work in New York, plans were devised for giving temporary support to the necessitous; the result being that an encouragement was held out to idleness and improvidence. 'The experience of New York in 1857' (says Mr Bruce), 'and of Boston and other cities since that date, proves that the soup-kitchen charity only creates pauperism. Despite the warning of the experienced, soup-kitchens and free lodgings were opened by public and private means, with the utmost liberality, in various portions of New York last winter, and enormous sums were contributed by private citizens for these popular benefactions. Before the winter was over, however, most of those engaged in them regretted, without doubt, that they had ever taken part in these kindly but mistaken charities. The reports of competent observers shew what were their effects. The announcement of the intended opening of these and kindred charities immediately called into the city the floating vagrants, beggars, and paupers who wander from village to village throughout the state. The streets of New York became thronged with this ragged, needy crowd; they filled all the station-houses and lodging-places provided by private charity, and overflowed into the island almshouses. Street-begging to the point of importunity became a custom. Ladies were robbed even on their own door-steps by these mendicants. Petty offences such as thieving and drunkenness increased. One of the free lodgings in the upper part of the city established by the Commissioners of Charities became a public nuisance from its rowdiness and criminality.

Nor would these paupers work. On one occasion, the almshouse authorities were discharging a band of able-bodied paupers, and having need of some light outdoor labour on the island, they offered these men what is thought good country wages—that is, fifteen dollars a month and board. They unanimously refused, preferring the free lodgings and free lunches of the city. Then, he adds, came the attractive power—the Power of Draw. 'Tramps came hurrying to the feast of charity, honest and hard-working labouring men from every part of the neighbouring country. Farms in the state of New York were left stripped of labourers, though the farmers offered good wages. Working-men came from as far away as Pittsburg and Boston, partly, no doubt, to see the sights of New York, but hoping also for aid from public and private charities. In some cases, young men were arrested in criminal houses, who made their headquarters in these soup-kitchens or relief-houses, and then sallied out to enjoy the criminal indulgences of the city.

The pauperising influences, however, of this indiscriminate charity reached beyond these classes. Poor families abandoned steady industry, got their

meals at the soup-kitchens, and spent the day in going from one charitable organisation to another. Those experienced with this class report that such people acquire a "Micawber" habit of depending on chances, and seldom return to constant work again. Instances were known of families taking their meals from the Relief Association and spending the money set aside for this daily in liquor, so that, in the poorest quarters the liquor-trade was never so prosperous. A singular effect was also produced on the class of homeless girls. Many avoided the houses where charity was connected with work, and obtained their meals at the free-lunch places, and then lodged in the low cheap lodging-houses, where their habits were uncontrolled and they could wander the streets at night. Many were thus enticed into ruin.

But another class now felt the pauperising influence of this charity, one which had never stooped to public alms before, the mechanics and artisans. These were not driven by the severest poverty. They had been in receipt of good wages, and had much money laid up in the savings-banks. They contributed through the winter large sums to various strikes and labour unions. The best proof that they were not pressed by poverty is that never once did they lower their demand for wages in any branch of industry. The most ignorant job-work, as for instance a man's labour in moving, was fifty cents an hour. Few would even clean snow from a side-walk or cut or saw wood or carry burdens for less than at the rate of two to two and a half dollars per diem. Mechanics still demanded from three to five dollars per diem. It was notorious that important trades, such as the building-trade, were at a standstill on account of high wages, and that the employing class could not afford to pay such high rates. Yet no wages came down. Labour was in struggle with capital against a lowering of prices. Charity assisted labour in the combat. The soup-kitchens and relief associations of various names became thronged with mechanics. Some of the best working-men in the city ate and lodged at the public expense. Thousands of able-bodied artisans, young and skilful, were fed by alms. The idleness and dependence injured many among them irretrievably. The whole settlement of the labour question was postponed by the over-generous charity of the city, and spring came upon the mechanical class without a revival of trade, which might have come if misguided kindness had not supported them in this struggle.

These benevolent institutions also interfered with many kinds of legitimate business. Thus in one ward, the eleventh, a number of small eating-house keepers, who had made an honest living by their occupation, were almost thrown into bankruptcy by the competition of certain soup-kitchens established by religious associations. A similar thing occurred in other wards. In one district also, a keeper of a laundry who had ten or twelve girls in his employment at good wages, found himself stripped of his help in the midst of the winter, these women preferring to live for nothing in the free lodgings. He accordingly was compelled to

advertise for help, but without success, and was ultimately obliged to close his laundry.

It had been expected that this industrial crisis would bring down the wages of female servants, since these had remained at a high rate, though all other prices had fallen. The superintendent of the Free Labour Bureau, however, stated that during all this distress, the poor girls who came to his office could not be induced to take situations for less than from fourteen to twenty dollars per month, and said that they preferred to live at the charitable institutions until they could get such wages as they chose. It is well known that the wages of female labour have been as high this winter as at any time since the war. One of the free dormitories for women was, in fact, broken up by its coming to the knowledge of the directresses that a lady on one occasion offered each lodger a situation in a good family at ten dollars per month, and not one of these "victims of poverty" could be found who would accept the place on the terms.

One way and another an injury was done through these pauperising influences which is even now scarcely remedied. The drawing of large numbers into the vortex of charity was in all respects inexcusable; for if the heedlessly benevolent had let matters alone, the more necessitous would have found remunerative work in quarters where labour was specially in demand. It should never be forgotten that there is a principle of readjustment in labour which tends to cure local disorganisations. What philanthropists have to do on pressing occasions like those mentioned is to interpose no distracting element, such as the temptation of free soup-kitchens, and to facilitate removal to spots where industry can be advantageously exercised.

In all the large cities in Great Britain we are acquainted with, there are antiquated semi-ruinous buildings in the alleys behind the main thoroughfares, which were at one time occupied by the affluent classes, but are now sunk to the condition of resorts for the idle, the drunken, and the dissolute, who habitually prey on society, and are a torment to the public authorities. Attempts to root out these dens of infamy and disease encounter a resolute opposition from those who from usurious motives have become the proprietors of such places, and more especially does opposition come from ratepayers who are shocked at the prospect of paying some trifle annually in the shape of an improvement tax. Antiquaries who have a morbid fancy for old houses which will scarcely hold together, and are as dark and unwholesome as dungeons, also have their howl. So that it is usually no easy matter to procure legislative authority to put our towns generally on a decent footing.

Let it be specially noted that narrow dingy lanes are the centres of nearly all that is degrading in towns whether large or small. The idle and dissolute do not approve of living in the face of day. They prefer to nestle in groups behind-backs, as being there less likely to incur observation. It is consistent with all experience that just as a town abounds in narrow lanes, it abounds in pauperism and every species of iniquity. Clear away your lanes, and you correspondingly lessen the number of the dangerous classes. Every town, of course, must have dwell-

ings suitable for the less affluent in the community, but in some way or other let all come to the front. In England, the behind-backs 'slums' we speak of are known as courts, in Scotland they are called closes; but whatever be their generic designation, they are a nuisance and a scandal, for they draw towards them, by under-currents of intelligence, the dregs of the population from all parts of the United Kingdom. Obviously, the attraction is intensified by the succours of one sort or other offered by public charities. What with holes and corners to creep into out of sight, and with the chance of coming in for a share of profuse benevolences, the Draw is complete.

A number of years ago, when at the head of a city municipality, we made a fair attempt, by legislative measures, to sweep away the worst class of closes, substituting for them open thoroughfares, and likewise endeavoured to put the public charities on a reasonably comprehensive footing. The degree of success was moderate. From the prevalence of narrow views, the 'Improvement Act' was so materially restricted as to convey the impression that, by ordinary forms of procedure, in which loquacious and popularity hunting agitators have their say, the improvement of towns, on a scale consistent with enlarged principles of sanitary and social economy is barely practicable. In vain you say of any special improvement that it would clear away the haunts of the disreputable, and at the same time lower the mortality to the extent of eight or ten per thousand annually. What is a lowering of the death-rate in comparison with the obligation to pay an additional rate of a penny per pound? Let things alone. The inertia of systematic obstruction accordingly prevails.

Curiously enough, as we speedily discovered, there are vested interests in charities. Each species of benevolence possesses an administrative organisation of chairmen, secretaries, collectors, and so forth, who with an affection for use and wont, do not readily perceive how there can be any advantage in a combination of distributive bodies. If you throw twelve separate charities into one, the officials connected with the eleven that are set aside will necessarily suffer extinction. There is a more cogent argument. Twelve collectors, each with his separate book, have a better chance of screwing money from householders than one solitary collector. Besides, there are peculiar fancies to be operated on. Some will contribute to Dispensaries, who could not be wheedled into subscribing for the support of a Soup-kitchen or the distribution of coals. Collectors, like sportsmen, know the bird they can bring down. In these circumstances, all that came out of our poor effort at combining charities was the establishment of another administrative body with the function of being a check on all descriptions of applicants. That this 'Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor,' has done some good by arresting promiscuous charity, is we believe generally allowed. On a similar plan there has been established in the metropolis, a 'Society for organising Charitable Relief and Repressing Mendicancy,' which we understand is working advantageously. It is indeed chiefly by the rigid scrutiny which is so organised, that the deserving poor can be properly aided and the worthless repressed. On the public at large, however, rests the responsibility of ridding

towns of their hosts of roughs and on-hangers; for so long as mean haunts in obscure courts and closes are suffered to exist, and while people indiscriminately yield to importunities, so long will be freely exercised the Power of Draw. W. C.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XXIV.—A NEIGHBOURLY VISIT.

JASPER, as he walked with dawdling gait back to the morning-room—the ex-cavalry officer always did dawdle, except in the hunting-field or when race-horses were thundering past the judge's chair—felt what in his case did duty for brains to be in a dizzy whirl. He could not grapple with the mystery which seemed to have chosen Carbery Chase for its headquarters. The captain was by no means, as has been said, one of those guileless youths, if such there be, who are slow to think evil. Shrew him a plain, intelligible, sordid motive, and no one could be quicker in desecrating it, no matter how fair a pretence of decorous honour might be kept up. But this was beyond him. 'No kith or kin of mine after all!' he muttered as he made his way along the thickly carpeted corridor. 'I must have been wrong, absurdly wrong all the time. But why my father should press me so hard on this subject no fellow could understand. He's in earnest though, about desiring the match.'

As he spoke he laid his grasp on the handle of the door of the morning-room, turned it, and entering, found with a complacent smile, that Ruth Willis was alone. Captain Denzil was on sufficiently good terms with himself, but even coxcombs are glad of the confirmatory snuffages of others; and Jasper felt as though he were under a sort of obligation to the baronet's ward for having paid him the compliment of falling in love with him.

'I thought,' said Jasper, as if to apologise for his presence in that pretty room, where a man seemed incongruous with the surroundings, 'that my sisters were here.'

'Shall I call them?' asked Ruth, with that sweet hypocrisy which girls only can exhibit, and half-rising from the tiny work-table as she spoke.

'Pray don't. I have nothing on earth to say to them, or indeed to anybody,' said Jasper. 'Life drags at Carbery like wheels on a mud-plastered road. Don't you find it so too, Miss Willis?'

'Indeed I do not,' answered the Indian orphan, taking up the cudgels gracefully in defence of her guardian's home. 'I should be very ungrateful if I did. It is not every day that a lonely little thing like myself is taken into the house of a kind dear family of new-old friends, who cherish and protect, and pet and spoil her, as your good father and sisters have done, Captain Denzil, to poor little Ruth Willis.'

She said this so well, did Ruth, in a voice that was slightly tremulous and with eyes that swam in tears, that Jasper was for the moment fairly taken in. There was uncommonly little sentiment in his own composition, but such men as he was, still like women to be softer-hearted than themselves, and then Miss Willis looked very pretty and delicate and helpless as she glanced up at him from under the screen of her dark eyelashes.

'I can't stand it, indeed I can't, if you cry,

Miss Willis!' he said, drawing a chair up to the tiny work-table. 'You have found me a sad bore and a sad plague, I am afraid, since I was stupid enough to do this at Pelworth races.'

As he spoke he looked down at his arm, which still reposed in its silken sling, and assumed a melancholy air, although in truth he felt all but well again. Ruth, from beneath her eyelashes, scanned him more narrowly than he was aware of.

'Is he amusing himself at my expense?' thus ran her quick thoughts. 'Or has he been applying thus early in the day to the cherry-brandy in his hunting-flask, or the contents of the decanters? No; he seems sober, and civil too. This is a puzzle.'

Miss Willis was justified in her perplexity, for this attention on Jasper's part was something new. The captain was not one of those men, of whom there are no lack, who in a country-house flirt to pass the time away, as naturally and with as little ulterior design as they smoke a cigar during their early stroll about the stables or the Home Farm. He had accepted, as an Eastern despot accepts the homage of his courtiers, fifty petty kindnesses at Ruth's hands during his illness, and had preferred her company to that of Lucy and Blanche simply because she was cleverer than they, and had the tact not to weary him.

'I was sorry to see you so much in pain, Captain Denzil, and glad when I could be of any use,' answered Ruth, plying her needle with that demure industry which can be intermitted or resumed with such skilful effect in the course of a conversation.

'Yes; and I was dear enough never to thank you, Miss Ruth. May I call you Ruth?' said Jasper, as he bent forward and took the girl's slender little hand in his. It was the first time that he had ever touched the hand of Miss Willis, save in the ceremonial salute with which members of a household meet for the day or part for the night.

'I like to be called Ruth by my friends,' returned the baronet's ward. 'Dear Blanche and Lucy always call me by my Christian name, and that pleases me, for I think it proves that they do not any longer regard me as a stranger. And that is much to me.'

There was a sweet simplicity, a touching pathos in Ruth's tone not wholly thrown away on Jasper. He could not quite distinguish whether or not she were playing a part; but if this were acting, he owned that it was, of its kind, excellent.

'I hope you count me among your friends?' he said, still keeping captive the little hand that he held.

'I shall be very pleased to do so,' returned Ruth, with a downward droop of her silken eyelashes.

'I wish I did know how to please you. It's a lesson I should like to learn,' said the captain, with a warmth that surprised himself, but before Miss Willis could return an appropriate answer, the door opened so quickly that she had barely time to snatch away her hand from Jasper's grasp before his two sisters were in the room. Blanche Denzil had an open note in her hand, and both girls wore an expression more animated than usual. Lucy was the first to speak.

'We want you, Jasper, to drive up with us to High Tor, if you feel strong enough this morning. Maud has written to Blanche, as she promised, you know, to let us know when her silver pheasants arrived from the dealer's in London; and this note'—and Lucy indicated the letter in her sister's hand—'has just come, begging us to go round and see the birds made comfortable in their new abode. The day is charming. You must come with us, indeed.'

'Pheasants before the First of October gives one leave to shoot them, are not much in my line,' said Jasper carelessly. 'What are *your* plans for this morning, Miss Willis?'

Ruth with becoming modesty replied that Captain Denzil was only too good to inquire as to the proceedings of so insignificant a person as she was. 'I try to be useful,' she said. 'Sometimes Sir Sykes allows me to read aloud to him the newspapers or a book. If nobody wants me, I think I shall stroll down to the quiet cool path in the woods beside the river. It is a favourite haunt of mine.'

'Well, I'll walk down there with you, if you don't mind my cigar, Miss Willis,' replied the captain languidly. 'I don't want particularly to go to High Tor, or to go into ecstasies over the fine feathers of a lot of fancy poultry cooped in a pen and called pheasants.'

'No, no,' said Blanche and Lucy with one accord; 'we are not going to allow you to play truant to-day. You must come, and so must Ruth. We never thought of leaving her behind' (this by-the-by was the whitest of white fibs, for up to that moment Ruth's companionship on the projected expedition had never once crossed the mind of either of the sisters); 'and there is plenty of room for all in the double basket-carriage.'

'I shall be bored, and shew it. The De Veres are not a bit in my line. Harrogate, for instance, I can't get on with for five minutes—my fault, I daresay. But he knows nothing and cares nothing about the things that interest me; and I trouble my head just as little about his model cottages and reclamation of waste lands and militia drill. The one subject we have in common is fox-hunting, and even on that we take somewhat different views.' This was a long speech for Jasper; but the concession which it somewhat ungraciously implied was readily accepted by his jubilant sisters.

'You forget Lady Gladys,' said Blanche archly; 'she would never forgive us if we appeared without you.'

The double basket-carriage, one of those convenient, roomy, and perhaps to male eyes ugly vehicles, that do so much good service in country places, came round in due course, drawn by its pair of strong and spirited Exmoor ponies, coblike, sturdy little animals, well fitted to make light of the steep Devonshire roads, yet shewing some of the fire and fleetness due to their dash of Arab blood. The 'clothes-basket on wheels,' as Jasper irreverently styled it, received its human freight; Miss Willis, in spite of Blanche's instances, seating herself meekly with her back to the horses, and the captain of course beside her. Lucy took the reins; the smart boy in livery who had been standing at the ponies' heads, let go the bridles and sprang deftly to his perch behind as the light carriage bowled merrily away along the smooth park road.

Never yet, since first she made her appearance at Carbery Chase, had Ruth looked one half so attractive, in her quaint elfish way, as she did then, as flashing and animated, her dark eyes saying far more than did her lips, she conversed with Jasper on the outward drive.

'I declare,' thought the captain to himself, 'if the governor had been a little more explicit, I wouldn't mind speaking out. With three thousand a year, or four—ay, it would require to be four—the thing might be managed.'

NOTHING NEW.

'THERE is no new thing under the sun,' says a proverb which is itself perhaps only the rehabilitation of some antediluvian precept to the same effect; and nothing so powerfully argues in favour of the truth of the statement as a little pamphlet written by the eccentric though clever Marquis of Worcester, and printed in London by J. Grismond in 1663. It is entitled, 'A Century of the Names and Scantlings of such Inventions as at present I can call to mind to have tried and perfected, which, my former Notes being lost, I have, at the instance of a powerful friend, endeavoured now, in the year 1655, to set these down in such a way as may sufficiently instruct me to put any of them in Practice.' Who the 'powerful friend' may have been it is impossible to say. The published catalogue was, however, dedicated to Charles II. by His Majesty's 'passionately devoted, or otherwise disinterested, subject and servant,' the Marquis.

This dedication is followed by a quaintly worded address to the two Houses of Parliament, craving patronage for the author's investigations, thanking the Lords and Commons for past favours, ruefully stating that the inventor had already spent ten thousand pounds on his experiments, and promising to prosecute his researches by the aid of one Casper Kaltoff, who for five-and-thirty years had been employed under him. The Marquis, in stating his merits, is not too modest, for he belauds his inventions and his disinterestedness to the skies, and in well-chosen words suggests that if the government refuse him its patronage, the government, and not he, will suffer. Then, after the custom of the age, he subscribes himself, 'Your most passionately bent fellow-subject in His Majesty's service, compatriot for the publick good and advantage, and a most humble servant to all and every of you, WORCESTER.'

So far the Marquis is, comparatively speaking, plain-spoken and straightforward; but when he begins to catalogue his discoveries, the reader feels bound to confess that though the noble peer may have set down his notes in such a way as might sufficiently instruct him to put any of them in practice, he scarcely amplified them sufficiently to instruct other people. Doubtless he was intentionally vague in the specifications or explanations of his inventions; for when he wrote, he still cherished a hope that he would reap some substantial fruits from his ingenuity; but in spite of his vagueness, he wrote at least enough to shew that many things even now regarded as new, had been roughly thought out by his fertile brain.

The specification first on the list is decidedly mysterious. It is entitled 'Seals abundantly sig-

nificant,' and professes to describe an invention whereby accounts may be kept mechanically, and a letter, 'though written into in English, may be read and understood in eight several languages, and in English itself to a clean contrary and different sense, unknown to any but the correspondent, and not to be read or understood by him neither, if opened before it arrive unto him.' Presumably this ambiguous statement alludes to an instrument for writing accounts and letters in cipher, for the four specifications that follow, treat of that hackneyed subject, and one of them of a system of short-hand which seems to be not without a modern representative. Next comes a plan for telegraphing by means of coloured flags and lights; and then 'A way how to level and shoot cannon by night as well as by day and as directly.' The ninth specification is terribly pertinent to the tragic event that happened at Bremerhafen in December 1875. It speaks of 'An engine, portable in one's pocket, which may be carried and fastened on the inside of the greatest ship, and at any appointed minute, through a week after, either of day or night, it shall irrevocably sink that ship.' The note immediately following suggests torpedoes, and relates to a plan for diving and fastening a similar engine to a vessel.

Nor were Admiral Hobart Pacha's attempts to ward off the attacks of these submarine monsters without a prototype; for the inventive Marquis at once goes on to hint at a method whereby a ship may be guarded from such a catastrophe either by day or by night. Specification number twelve is scarcely less suggestive of water-tight compartments, for it alludes to 'A way to make a ship not possible to be sunk, though shot an hundred times betwixt wind and water by cannon.' The next note does not seem to have prompted the exertions of modern inventors; but who shall say whether number fourteen is not responsible for the employment of steam, or even of hydraulic power, for the working of a vessel? At all events, it hints at the economisation of labour, and at the multiplication of force without the intervention of a capstan or of similar machinery. Number fifteen palpably suggests the application of some motive-power very like steam to boats. The Marquis speaks of 'A way how to make a boat work itself against wind and tide, yea, both without the help of man or beast; yet so that the wind or tide, though directly opposite, shall force the ship or boat against itself.'

It is not surprising that, in the middle of the seventeenth century, this, among many other alleged inventions, was regarded as somewhat chimerical; and indeed, at the present moment, if we except steam, it is hard to believe that the noble lord was not solemnly joking with Charles II. and the two Houses of Parliament. But a subsequent specification, which we shall notice in its due order, proves that the Marquis knew of the power of steam, and had practically experimented with it; and there are therefore some grounds for thinking that, had he been properly subsidised and assisted, the name of Worcester might have been as intimately associated with the great modern means of locomotion as are those of Watt and Fulton. Unfortunately the Marquis was too much in advance of his age, and thus his genius was lost upon it.

A very common table ornament of the present

day is hinted at in number eighteen, which speaks of 'An artificial fountain to be turned like an hour-glass by a child in the twinkling of an eye.' And number nineteen plainly suggests the carriage-brake as now applied by every coachbuilder. The two succeeding notices relate to the use of water as a motive-power. And number twenty-three tells of a water-clock intended not only to shew the time, but also the motions of the heavenly bodies. Number twenty-four is a plan for discharging bullets by means of a silent spring, 'admirable for fire-works and astonishing of besieged cities.' And number twenty-six is a method for the more effectual employment of the lever as a mechanical force. Then follows a dark hint at the employment of pontoons for the formation of military bridges over broad rivers; and another specification, number thirty, speaks of a system for enabling four pieces of cannon 'to discharge two hundred bullets each hour'—a thing which, under the old system of loading by manual power at the muzzle, would have been quite impossible. This is followed by a number of different plans for writing in cipher, and for communicating by means of various objects, such as knotted strings, fringes, bracelets, gloves, &c., and by the smell, taste, and touch. Number forty-four is a way 'To make a key of a chamber-door which to your sight hath its wards and rose-pipe but paper-thick, and yet at pleasure in a minute of an hour shall become a perfect pistol, capable to shoot through a breast-plate commonly of carbine-proof, with prime, powder, and firelock, undiscoverably in a stranger's hand.' Such a diabolical machine in the possession of one of the many unscrupulous gentlemen of the period, would indeed have been a murderous weapon if used freely in the dimly lighted streets of London. Scarcely less unpleasant must have been the Venetian instrument for noiselessly discharging a poisoned needle at an unsuspecting enemy.

Next come specifications headed respectively 'A most concealed tinder-box,' 'An artificial bird,' and 'An hour water-ball;' the last of which speaks of a ball of any metal, 'which, thrown into a pool or pail of water, shall presently rise from the bottom, and constantly shew, by the superficies of the water, the hour of the day or night, never rising more out of the water than just to the minute it sheweth of each quarter of the hour; and, if by force kept under water, yet the time is not yet lost, but recovered as soon as it is permitted to rise to the superficies of the water.' Number forty-eight is the description of an improved staircase, and number forty-nine of 'A portable engine, in way of a tobacco tongs, whereby a man may get over a wall, or get up again being come down, finding the coast proving unsecure unto him.' Then there is 'A pocket ladder,' 'A rule of gradation' useful for cipher-writing, 'A mystical jangling of bells' for the conveyance of private intelligence, and three notices relating to 'water-screens.' Number fifty-six is entitled 'An advantageous change of centers,' and respecting it the Marquis says: 'A most incredible thing if not seen, but tried before the late king of blessed memory, in the Tower by my directions, two extraordinary ambassadors accompanying His Majesty, and the Dukes of Richmond and Hamilton, with most of the court, attending him. The

wheel was fourteen feet over, and forty weights of fifty pounds apiece. Sir William Balfour, then lieutenant of the Tower, can justify it with several others. They all saw that no sooner these great weights passed the diameter line of the lower side but they hung a foot further from the center, nor no sooner passed the diameter line of the upper side but they hung a foot nearer. Be pleased to judge the consequence.' In this modest request the Marquis appears to shroud a hint that he has discovered the secret of perpetual motion, which, however, has like all other perpetual-motion schemes, failed in practice.

Specification number fifty-eight is certainly in some measure responsible for the modern revolver, telling as it does of a method 'whereby a pistol may be made to discharge a dozen times with one loading, and without so much as once new priming requisite, or to change it out of one hand into the other, or stop one's horse.' And the next notices are for the application of similar systems to carbines, muskets, arquebuses, and crooks or ship-muskets, and of a different method for sakers. In these ideas we may recognise indeed the first principles not only of the revolver, but also of the Winchester rifle and of the mitrailleuse in its various forms. Warfare has recently been revolutionised by inventions of this kind; and the conditions of naval warfare especially are now likely to be altered by the arrangement which practically places the whole broadside of a vessel under the control of one man. For this latter improvement we may find the idea in the Marquis's plan by which 'one man in the cabin may cover the whole side of ship-muskets, to the number, if need require, of two or three thousand shots.' After devoting several notices to the various aspects of this subject, the noble inventor complacently remarks: 'When first I gave my thoughts to make guns shoot often, I thought there had been but one only exquisite way inventible, yet by several trials and much charge I have perfectly tried all these.' The necessary experiments appear to have left him with an old cannon or two upon his hands, as the next and most important specification shows that the scientific nobleman nearly succeeded in blowing himself up, and so concluding his investigations. He calls it 'A fire water-work;' and probably that remarkable name expresses, as well as any other might, the Marquis's 'admirable and most forcible way to drive up water by fire, not by drawing or sucking it upwards, for that must be as the philosopher calleth it, *intra sphaeram activitatis*, which is but at such a distance. But,' he emphatically continues, 'this way hath no bounder, if the vessels be strong enough.'

Then he goes on to give us what seems to be the earliest record of the employment of steam-power in England. 'I have taken,' he says, 'a piece of a whole cannon, whereof the end was burst, and filled it three-quarters full of water, stopping and screwing up the broken end, as also the touch-hole; and making a constant fire under it, within twenty-four hours it burst and made a great crack. So that having a way to make my vessels, so that they are strengthened by the force within them, and the one to fill after the other, I have seen the water run like a constant fountain-stream forty feet high; one vessel of water, rarefied by fire, driveth up forty of cold water. And a

man that tends the work is but to turn two cocks; that, one vessel of water being consumed, another begins to force and re-fill with cold water, and so successively, the fire being tended and kept constant, which the self-same person may likewise abundantly perform in the interim between the necessity of turning the said cocks.' Following this are four notices relating to improvements for locks to chests and safes, one relating to a draw-bridge, and one treating of what the Marquis calls 'A concealed door'—namely one which will open either inwards or outwards.

Two paragraphs further on comes the short specification, 'How to make a man to fly; which I have tried with a little boy of ten years old in a barn, from one end to the other, on a hay-mow.' The last clause is certainly acceptable; for it justifies a hope that the poor little fellow did not break his neck in the pursuit of science. The three succeeding notices are entitled respectively 'A continually going watch,' 'A total locking of cabinet-boxes,' and 'Light pistol barrels;' and the headings serve to demonstrate at least the vagueness of the author. Next come two methods for carrying secret correspondence without observation, an idea for the economisation of labour in rasping hartshorn, and the specification of a calculating machine. These are followed by notices of two barbarous engines, respectively called 'An unthoughtsome pear' and 'An imprisoning chair,' of a candle-moulding machine, and of a talkative artificial head, the *modus operandi* of which we take the liberty of smiling at. The Marquis states that his invention would answer in French, Latin, Welsh, Irish, or English, any question put to it, and then shut its mouth until the next question was asked. It cannot be doubted that if the artificial head were so life-like as to be able to answer questions, it would also do a little talking on its own account. The noble Lord seems at this period to have been suffering from an attack of moral depravity; for the incredible notice of the brazen head is followed by two specifications of methods for cheating at cards and dice respectively; and a little lower down, we come upon 'a little engine portable in one's pocket, which placed to any door, without any noise but one crack, openeth any door or gate.' Number ninety-three is the specification of an engine for raising sunken ships; and at the end of the long catalogue are some mysterious notices of a machine which the Marquis modestly calls 'a semi-omnipotent engine,' and of two other machines which conjointly seem to hint at some knowledge of hydraulic power of which the discoverer was particularly proud. 'I deem this invention,' he says, 'to crown my labours, to reward my expenses, and make my thoughts acquiesce in way of further inventions;' and he concludes by hinting at leaving to posterity a book wherein his inventions, 'with the shape and form of all things belonging to them, should be printed by brass plates.'

And so we will take leave of the inventive nobleman, who, though apparently not always too voracious, was decidedly a genius. It is probably owing to the fact of his having lived in an unappreciative age that he is to this day usually placed on a level with the fabulous Academicians of Leyden, rather than among such men as Franklin, Arkwright, and Watt; but on the other hand, it is not unlikely that had his Century of Inventions

been judiciously reduced to a score, or even a dozen, the Marquis of Worcester's reputation among his contemporaries might have stood proportionately higher.

AN INSURANCE TALE.

I AM a solicitor of considerable standing and practice in a large provincial town in Ireland, the name of which it is here unnecessary to mention. On the evening of the 31st of December some twenty-five years ago, I was in the aforesaid town sitting in my study. The day had been one of unusual inclemency; rain had alternated with sleet and snow; and the cold and cutting wind had blown with a rude strength which made its chilly touch at once incisive. As the shades of night had begun to fall, the storm, instead of abating, had risen in turbulence and height; and at the hour of which I am about to speak, the spasmodic energy of the elements seemed like the last convulsions of the dying year. I had been reading some legal documents during the evening; but perceiving from a glance at my watch that it was fast approaching twelve o'clock, I laid my papers aside and drew my chair nearer to the fire. The hail beat violently against the windows, the wind sighed amongst the trees outside, and the keyhole of my study-door expressed its feelings in tones if possible more melancholy.

The feeling of which I was conscious, as I sat thus gazing into the blazing comfort before me, was one of selfish satisfaction that I was not at the mercy of the tempest outside. Forms of various human sufferers presented themselves to my mental vision, and seemed to take the shape of the red coals in the fire; while the wind and my sorrowing keyhole seemed vocal with the burden of their woe. I was soon plunged in a deep moralising on the misery which we see around us—on that strange invisible link between sorrow and sin; and the last moments of the passing year were just landing me in one of those good resolutions which we are told form such excellent paving-stones, when I was aroused from my moral reverie by a knock at my study-door. Pushing my chair back a little distance from the fire, and assuming a more professional air, I articulated the well-known 'Come in;' and this mandate was duly obeyed by my servant, who informed me that a gentleman outside was particularly anxious to see me.

A moment afterwards, a figure which in all but size resembled our old friend the 'drowned rat,' entered my study, and making a courteous bow, said: 'I fear this is a very unreasonable hour to intrude upon you, sir.' My visitor was very tall, had a pale thoughtful face, and when he unbuttoned the coat which covered him from head to foot, I perceived that he was a clergyman.

'Won't you take a seat by the fire?' I said, 'for you must be very cold and wet such a night as this.'

'Thank you, sir,' he replied; 'I am too wet to sit down. I had better tell you at once the cause of this unseasonable visit. I have been attending in my capacity as a Christian minister a young lady who has been very ill, and is now, I believe, dying. She sent for me to-night about ten o'clock, and when I went to her, she entreated me to go for a solicitor. I had heard of you, sir, as a man

of standing in that profession, and I have accordingly come to ask you to drive over with me to her.'

I suggested that the lady very probably wanted to make her will, and wished for professional assistance.

'I cannot tell,' he replied. 'I asked her if no one but a solicitor would do, and she said no. She said she must see a solicitor before she died. She seemed terribly distressed, and pressed her request so earnestly upon me that I felt I dare not neglect it.'

'How far is the young lady's residence from this?' I asked, wishing to bring the matter to a practical issue.

'About ten miles,' replied the clergyman.

'Ten miles on a night such as this is no joke!' 'It is, sir, a long drive, and I know that the night is very severe; but I would take it as a great favour if you would come with me. I know not where to go or what to do, if you decline. I will drive you there, and send my car back with you; and you will of course hold me responsible for your fees.'

The last sentence decided my wavering resolve and gained the clergyman's object; for what attorney ever remained inactive where he had a good mark for costs? So shrugging my shoulders, I said: 'Well, I suppose I had better go with you, though I should much prefer going to bed.'

'Thank you,' he replied; 'it is very good of you to consent.'

Having provided myself with the writing materials necessary to draft a will, and having wrapped myself from head to foot in waterproof, I accompanied the clergyman to the hall-door. There we ascended the conveyance which was to take us to our destination, and soon were cutting our way through the driving sleet and snow. Being of an inquisitive turn of mind, I thought it would be wise to elicit from the clergyman some little information about the young lady whose will I supposed that I was about to draw; and with that view I began to examine him. I, however, found that he could tell me very little. He only knew that she was a Miss M—; that she had been staying with an aunt of hers who lived in his parish; that she had become dangerously ill some four or five days previously; that he believed she was an only daughter; that her mother was dead; and that her father had been telegraphed for, and was expected to arrive in the morning. He added earnestly: 'He will never see his daughter alive, poor man!'

While we were speaking, the joy-bells had begun to ring out their merry peals, welcoming in the new year. In a few moments, however, after the clergyman's last remark, they ceased, and a dead silence ensued. 'How ironical was the tone of those bells!' said the clergyman with a sigh, as the last peal was dying away. I answered half-unconsciously 'Yes;' but I little knew how fully I would comprehend his meaning before many hours had passed away.

After a long and bitter drive, the conveyance at last drew up at a large old-fashioned house, with the appearance of which I was well acquainted, and which I knew to be the residence of an old lady of property, though I had never been inside it. The clergyman, on alighting, brought me round to a side-door, at which he knocked very

gently. After he had knocked two or three times, the door was at length opened to us by an elderly woman, whom I afterwards learned to be the nurse, and who conducted us, by the aid of a lantern, up an old winding-stair into a long corridor. Stopping before a door at the end of it, the nurse motioned us to wait while she entered the room. She had been only a few seconds inside, when I heard a low moan, and a female voice exclaim almost in a cry: 'Oh, has the time come?' A moment afterwards the clergyman and myself had entered the room, and lying on a bed in the middle of it I saw the form of a young girl apparently about twenty-four or twenty-five years of age. As we approached her bedside, the clergyman said to her: 'I have brought the solicitor with me'; but she did not answer him, and gently waved her hand for the nurse and himself to leave the room.

After they had left, she looked at me earnestly for a minute and then said in a faint voice: 'Are you a solicitor, sir?'

I answered: 'I am'; and added: 'I suppose you wish me to draw your will for you?'

'My will!' she said with evident surprise. 'Ah no! I have nothing to leave, except perhaps my heart.' She remained for some time after this without speaking, her silence being only broken by moans such as I had heard from the corridor. After a little while I heard her murmur: 'O my father, my poor dear father! must it be?' then clasping her two almost fleshless hands, she closed her eyes for a few moments. At last, with evident effort, she turned round on her pillow, and looking straight at me, said in a voice tremulous with weakness and emotion: 'I want, sir, to make a statement to you which I feel it my duty to make before I die. It has tortured me for months, and I dare not meet my Maker if I did not tell all, though it breaks my very heart to do so.'

Fearing that she was going to confess some crime, or make some other important criminal declaration, I said to her: 'If you are about to make any statement which may be of importance afterwards, I had better go for a magistrate, and you can make it before him.'

'O no, sir; no magistrate!' she cried out earnestly. 'What I have to tell concerns my poor father, and I dare not state it to a magistrate, for it might ruin him. If you will not hear me and try to save my poor father, I shall die with sealed lips. O my father! my good kind father! it is too, too cruel that I must tell of your sin.' The last words were pronounced almost in a cry; the tears filled her eyes, and she began to sob piteously. Her rocking couch soon followed; and I feared that she must, indeed die, 'with sealed lips,' as she had said; for to me it seemed that every succeeding cough must be her last. After a little while, however, a slight respite came, and she tried to resume her statement. She gasped out: 'The insurance—the Blank Insurance' (mentioning the name of a well-known Company); 'it's not my'—But before she could get any farther, the cough again seized her, and this time with such terrible power that the poor creature fell back utterly exhausted.

Fearing that her life was now really waning, I went to the door of the room for the nurse, who at once came in. When she had settled the suf-

ferer in a more easy position, she turned to me and whispered: 'Very little longer, sir.' I, however, remained in the room, in the hope that after a little time she might have strength to resume her statement; but when half an hour had nearly elapsed without bringing with it any sign of returning strength, I saw that the statement must remain in its unfinished condition. I therefore wrote down carefully all that had occurred, put it into an envelope, sealed it, placed it in my pocket, and prepared to go away. Before doing so, I took one look at the form that lay on the bed before me. To describe her face, I cannot, though I seem to see it as distinctly to-day as I saw it then—one of those strangely exquisite flowers, whose tender growth so often kindles the selfish craving of the old reaper, Death. I had stood by many a death-bed; my profession had inured me to scenes of anguish and pain; but as I looked on that pale beautiful woman, and read on her features the impression which told only too plainly of a conflict of racking reality within, my cold heart softened, and my whole nature went forth in one great yearning to comfort and to soothe her. I breathed a prayer for the soul that was passing—earnest, as I had never known earnestness before; and with feelings too sad to portray, but too real to be forgotten, I left the room and the house.

Two days after this eventful night, my friend the clergyman (whom I subsequently discovered to be the newly appointed rector of a neighbouring parish) again entered my study. He told me that the poor young girl was dead, that she had passed away about half an hour after I had left the room, never having spoken a word after that terrible fit of coughing to which I had been a witness.

The question then came to be decided as to the meaning of the broken statement made by the young girl, and what was my duty with regard to it. I have since frequently questioned the wisdom and propriety of the course which I then pursued; but whether right or wrong, my action was the result of much deliberation. I wrote in the first instance to the insurance Company, asking them if they would kindly inform me, as solicitor for the late Miss M—, whether any insurance had been effected on her life with that Company; and if so, when and by whom it was effected, what was the amount of it, and to whom it had become payable by the fall of Miss M—'s life. I received a letter in reply from the secretary of the Company, informing me that my young friend had herself, about a year previously, effected an insurance on her own life in two policies of five thousand pounds each, and that if she had lived, she would have received the policies during her lifetime, the sum of ten thousand pounds was payable to her executors or administrators, as the case might be.

The receipt of this information led me to believe, what I had suspected before, that there was something wrong about this insurance, though I could not exactly determine the nature of that something. I therefore wrote a second time to the Company, stating that I had reason to believe that it would be wise for the Company to make careful inquiries with reference to the Policy, before surrendering its value. The secretary at once wrote back to me asking me to state the information which led me to form this belief; but I replied that

I was not in possession of any information whatever bearing on the matter, but that from what took place at an interview which I had had with the late Miss M—— a short time before her death, I had been led to suspect that there was something wrong about the insurance.

I heard no more of the matter till one morning some two or three months afterwards, when I was honoured with a visit from the secretary and solicitor of the insurance Company. They told me that the father of my poor young friend had threatened them with legal proceedings if they did not pay the amount of the insurance at once, and asked me to tell them exactly what had passed at the interview to which I had alluded in my letter. At first I hesitated as to whether I ought to do so or not, but ultimately I gave them a true account of all that had taken place on that fatal 31st of December. They thanked me warmly, said they thought I had only done my duty in disclosing the matter to them, and went away.

What use the Company made of this information, or what means they adopted to probe the mystery to its source, I do not know; but about six months after my interview with the secretary and solicitor, when I was beginning to hope that I should never hear of the case again, I received a summons to attend at an assizes to be shortly holden in the county town of a northern shire. There was no means of refusing this command, though I would have given a good deal to be able to evade it. I therefore found myself, about a fortnight after its receipt, quietly sitting in the crowded court-house of the aforesaid town, a witness in the case of 'M—— versus The Blank Insurance Company.'

I had but little difficulty as I looked round the court in identifying the plaintiff; for my eyes soon rested on a manly form bearing an unmistakable resemblance to the young girl by whose death-bed I had stood about a year before. The beauty of her face was there moulded in lines of masculine firmness and power; and though her father's expression was far from pleasing, there was nothing about him at all indicative of the character subsequently exhibited to the court. He appeared to be a gentleman of good birth and position; and as I looked at him before the case began, I was very curious to know what was his real position with reference to the insurance, and how far it would be disclosed on the evidence.

His counsel, in opening the plaintiff's case, said that it was one of the simplest cases ever ushered into a court of justice. The facts, he said, were simply these: 'Two years previously, the late Miss M—— insured her life with the defendants, the Blank Insurance Company, in two policies of five thousand pounds each. A year after, she had effected these insurances, Miss M—— had died, without having assigned or disposed of the policies in any way. Her father, the plaintiff, was her only next of kin and her administrator, and was now entitled absolutely to the ten thousand pounds; which the Company, however, had refused to pay.' To an uninitiated spectator, the evidence for the plaintiff certainly seemed to bear out the counsel's statement; but when the plaintiff's case had closed, the counsel on behalf of the Company rose and said that they were in a position to prove

by a connected chain of evidence that every word of the plaintiff's case was valueless, and that this insurance had been effected under circumstances of the grossest fraud and crime.

I myself was the first witness called on behalf of the Company; and after much objection, I was allowed to give a plain unvarnished description of the scene which I have already depicted on that sad night. You could have heard a pin drop while I was speaking, and the sensation which was produced in court was manifest. I was of course severely cross-examined; but as I had nothing to conceal, my testimony was not shaken.

The next witness for the Company was an eminent London physician, who stated that in the beginning of March, two years previously, Mr M—— had come to him in London, and had brought with him a young lady, who he said was his daughter, to have her examined by him. He then made a careful examination of the young lady, and found her to be in rapid consumption, of which result he told Mr M——, and added at the same time that she could not in his opinion live for six months. The Company's own doctor was next called, and stated that at the end of the same month of March, Mr M—— had come to him in London, and told him that his daughter was anxious to effect an insurance on her life with the Blank Company, and asked him to appoint a day to examine her. He had known Mr M—— for many years, but had never seen his daughter. Mr M——, however, told him that she was a healthy country girl, and he would have no difficulty in passing her for the Company. It was then agreed that he should call upon Mr M—— the next day at the hotel at which they were staying and examine his daughter. He did so; and Mr M—— then introduced to him as his daughter a handsome healthy-looking girl, with all the appearance of having lived in the country. The girl looked so very healthy, that he did not think it necessary to make any minute examination of her, and merely questioned her as to what diseases—if any—she had had. She seemed very much confused, but this he attributed to her natural shyness. He recommended the Company to insure her life at the ordinary rate for her age, which was then twenty-four. The doctor was then told to look round the court and say if he saw any one like the young girl whom on that occasion he had examined; and after a little while he pointed to a young girl, and said that he believed that she was the person whom he had then examined.

The excitement in court at this announcement can scarcely be imagined. Every eye was turned on the young girl, who a few minutes afterwards ascended the witness-table. As I gazed at her, I was painfully reminded of the poor creature whom I had seen lying in such trouble less than a year before; for the likeness to her was strangely great. There was, however, a robustness, a glow of health about the girl whom I now saw for the first time, which was sadly wanting in my young friend, and which served to conceal a resemblance otherwise manifest. She said that she lived in the south of England with her father, who was a well-to-do farmer. Two years and a half previously, Mr M—— and his daughter had come to lodge at their farm for the benefit of Miss M——'s health, as she was then very delicate. Every one noticed a very strong likeness between herself and Miss M——,

and a firm friendship arose between them. Mr and Miss M—— stayed about six months at the farm; and when they were about to go away to London, Mr M—— proposed that she should go up with them as a companion to his daughter, which she did. On the day before they left London, Miss M—— went out with her father to pay a visit, and she was left by herself in the hotel. She was sitting alone in their private room reading, when suddenly Mr M—— returned alone, rushed into the room, and said in a threatening manner: 'You must say you are my daughter! There is a gentleman coming in now; and mind you *must* say you are my daughter! If you don't, we'll all be ruined. Remember!' He then hastened back, and in less than a minute re-entered with the Company's doctor, the last witness. She was so completely taken by surprise and overcome with alarm, that she did not know what she was doing, but nevertheless felt completely under the influence of Mr M——. He introduced her to the doctor as his daughter; the doctor shook hands with her, and said he was glad to see her looking so strong and well. He asked her whether she had lived much in the country; and said he thought it would be a mere farce to go through the form of examining any one who looked so completely the essence of health as she did. He mentioned a great number of diseases, and asked her if she ever had had any of them; and after some other remarks he concluded with: 'Well, I think I may now tell them that you're not going to die yet awhile.' He then talked a little to Mr M——; they had wine together; he bade adieu to her, and the two gentlemen quitted the house. All was mystery to her. She now began to entertain a confused sort of dread of Mr M——. When his daughter came home, she told her all about it, and asked her what it meant; but Miss M—— said that she did not know—that perhaps it was a joke of her father's. She, however, forced Miss M—— to promise never to say anything about it.

What the effect of this evidence was on the occupants of the court, I can hardly say, for I was too much absorbed in my own thoughts to notice any manifestation of feeling in others. The truth was now only too plain. The father of my young friend, knowing that his daughter's health was failing, had resolved to profit by her death, and with that intent had secured a simple country girl and brought her up to London, to be the unwitting means of accomplishing his unfeeling design. In London he had learned on the best authority that his daughter could not live for six months, and within a month afterwards he had insured her life in her own name, without her knowledge, for a large sum of money, which he knew must be paid to him on her death; and to secure the heirs for which he craved, he had passed off by his poor dying daughter a healthy country girl; he had lied to his old friend, and caused an innocent girl to perpetrate a fraud. As these facts came home to my mind in their horrid reality, I gazed across the court to see the man who had conceived this mighty inhumanity. The coil of truth, as it had been gradually unravelled by the witnesses, seemed to have wound itself serpent-like round the frame of its foe; for the form which a little while before had been erect and defiant was now humbly prone, the eye which had glanced restlessly round the

court was now fixed on the ground, and a death-like pallor lay on his countenance.

The jury without leaving their box pronounced their verdict for the Company, and the judge thereupon solemnly announced that he would direct a criminal prosecution to be instituted against the plaintiff for the crimes disclosed in that most painful case. At this announcement, I rose and entreated the judge not to adopt that course. I reminded him of the dying anxiety of the poor daughter to have her father saved, and urged that the plaintiff would be sufficiently punished by the loss of position which must be consequent on the verdict. But my solicitations were all in vain. The judge said that he sat there to protect society, and that if such crimes as had been that day disclosed were allowed to pass unpunished, he would fall in the duty which he sat there to discharge. A few minutes afterwards Mr M—— left the court in custody; and as I saw him thus committed to the pitiless mercy of the law, compassion—which can look on the wicked as well as the good—seemed to rise within me, and I almost regretted that I had put the insurance Company on the track which they had followed with such fatal accuracy.

The law, however, though very powerful, is not omnipotent; and in this case its power was destined to be futile. It was found not to be convenient to try Mr M—— at the same assizes; and his trial was therefore postponed till the following one, and he himself allowed out on bail. The next assizes came round, and everything was ready for the trial; but the prisoner was nowhere to be found. They called him in the court, they called him outside; but in vain. It was soon found that the prisoner had absconded—vanished no one knew where; and the individuals who had been kind enough to stake a portion of their worldly goods on his reappearance, were asked to shew their affection for him by paying the penalty which the law so properly attaches to such misplaced philanthropy. The following comment on the case appeared a day or two afterwards in the local newspaper: 'We can only say that justice has been defeated, and a very bad type of criminal has escaped unpunished. The inscrutable wisdom of Providence has reserved his punishment for another world.'

More than twenty years after the events above narrated, the course of my professional business led me to cross the Atlantic and visit the city of New York. It happened in the course of that visit, as I was returning to my hotel at a late hour one night, that I became conscious that a human form was following me. I at once looked round, and saw within a yard of me an old man with a long white beard and weather-beaten face, dressed in ragged attire, shoeless and stockingless. Something in his face caught my attention, and on looking at it more closely, I recognised it as one which I had seen before, though I could not then tell where. When I turned round, the old man muttered in an earnest, almost savage manner: 'Give me some money; I want it badly—very badly;' but as I did not feel quite easy at finding so questionable a creature so close to me at such an hour of the night and in a strange city, I made no reply to his request, but hastened my steps. He, however, followed me, and again craved for

money; and this time I answered in our English stereotyped form: 'I have nothing for you, my good man.'

I suppose, however, that he did not catch my reply, for he added sharply: 'What do you say?' To which I answered: 'I say that I have no money for you.'

'Do you indeed?' he said with fury. 'Then keep it, and perish with it. I hope it may drag you down, as it did me.' With these words he turned away, and I heard his steps behind me no more; but I had not gone very far when I recollected on what former occasion I had seen the old man's face. I remembered that it was the same face which twenty years before I had seen in that northern court-house—the face that had known a death-like pallor when the heavy chain of Truth clanked forth its tale of hidden guilt. I at once stopped and turned round; but I could only distinguish faintly the outline of his figure in the distance; and as I gazed at that ragged form, retreating I knew not whither, there flashed with vivid reality through my mind the events which I have endeavoured here to relate, and I remembered the words of a thoughtful modern writer: 'The secrets of men's lives are rarely held inviolate till eternity—there is a reckoning here without the aid of eternal books.'

THE PRAIRIES AND THEIR INHABITANTS.

THE subject of sport has a fascinating interest for readers of almost every class. Nor is this interest lessened when the scene of such adventures is laid in the wide prairies of the Far West. On those vast plains, ocean-like in their rolling expanse, the wigwam of the red man, and the bison and other denizens of the prairie, are alike disappearing, to be succeeded by the stately and magnificent cities which are the result of American enterprise and civilisation. Lieutenant-colonel Dodge, an officer in the United States army, gives us, in his *Hunting Grounds of the Great West* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1877), an instructive résumé of the present aspect and position of those plains, which are still in great measure a Debatable Land, on the frontiers of which a fierce warfare is almost constantly being carried on between the wandering Indian tribes and the white settlers who are every year supplanting them.

The distinctive term 'The Plains' is specially applied to the area of rolling prairies extending from the mountains of Texas on the south to the British line on the north, and from the Missouri river on the east to the Rocky Mountains on the west.

Although called Plains they are never absolutely level, but present many undulations and much variety of surface. Even in their most barren stretches they are covered with short grass, but are almost without trees, which grow only in the cañons or deep water-courses. On the higher Plains this absence of trees is caused by want of water and the prevalence of high winds; and on the lower, by the prairie-fires kindled by the Indians, by the devastation caused by beavers, and by the prevalence, although in a lesser degree, of wind. In winter, on these wide Plains the storms are sometimes fearful; the icy cold north wind curdles the blood in the veins, and is speedily

fatal to any living creature that is exposed to its fury; even birds fall dead in great numbers. Its destructiveness is only equalled by the terrific rain, thunder, and hail-storms which occur in summer.

No one should ever travel over the Plains without a compass, although in the unsettling misery of feeling lost, confidence is sometimes lost even in that friendly guide. In winter, from the glare of the sun on the wide waste of snow, a painful affection called snow-blindness is experienced by most travellers on the Plains. Not only is the power of vision temporarily lost, but if the skin be at all sensitive, the face and hands swell and blister, and are as exquisitely painful as if scorched by fire. In travelling, the choice of a camping-place is of the first importance; water, grass, and wood are essential requisites, and so is a knowledge of the special dangers which beset wanderers on these prairies. Camp-life, Colonel Dodge tells us, with a good tent, a nice mess-kit, plenty of bedding, a travelling kitchen, and supplies of preserved fruit and vegetables, is very enjoyable indeed. The rifle rarely fails to provide a good dinner, to which the hunters return at sunset with a keen appetite, which enables them to do full justice to the dainties of the prairie. These discussed, they collect in the cool breezy evening around the camp-fire, and with pipe and flask and song and story, the short twilight hours go merrily by.

One of the most frequent dangers to which camp-life is exposed is prairie-fire, which rises and spreads on all sides, to the height sometimes of thirty feet, half-stifling the men with smoke and heat, and driving the animals frantic with terror. Another danger arises from the sudden and severe rain-storms, which are so excessive that they may be aptly denominated water-spouts. Fancy a party of hunters in their comfortable well-appointed camp, pitched as camps often are, on the bank of a half-dry stream. After a luxurious dinner and pleasant social evening, each has retired to his own special tent, when suddenly the unmistakable rush and roar of a large volume of water awakens the traveller. In a moment he is upon his feet, rushing out into the darkness to discover if possible what it all means. The green sward of the night before is gone—water is before, behind, around him, everywhere!

When morning breaks, cold and gray, it shows, instead of the picturesque river-bluff and comfortable camp, an apparently shoreless lake, with one or two cotton-wood trees gallantly stemming the flood, on the topmost boughs of which are a few forlorn specimens of humanity, cowering before the keen wind, which as it careers along the prairie, makes sad havoc of the few fluttering remnants of their sleeping apparel. Fortunately, however, these deluges are of short continuance, and abate as quickly as they rise. Another danger, the possibilities of which are diminishing every year, arises from the stampedes to which the herds of buffalo are periodically subject. When this sudden panic seizes these immense brutes, they rush blindly on after the leaders, trampling over everything that comes in their way. Our author was camping out one night in the spring of 1871 with four wagons and a small escort. He had gone to bed, but was not asleep, when he fancied that he heard a faint, rushing sound; and suspicious that it might

be a water-spout, he sprang out of his tent, and peered up the creek beside which the camp was pitched. He strained his eyes in the darkness to discover the line of foam, which is generally the precursor of an approaching deluge; but to his surprise he could discover nothing; yet the sound went on increasing, and came evidently from the prairie. Suddenly its probable cause flashed upon him, and arousing his men, he explained to them what he feared and besought them to keep calm. This was somewhat difficult for the buffalo were already in sight, and to all appearance bearing right down upon them. 'Our only chance,' he said, 'is to try to split the herd; if we cannot do that, we are lost!' With that end in view he stationed his men fifty yards from the camp, and in trembling and fear awaited the onslaught. On, with a heavy trampling thud like thunder, rushed the unwieldy mass till they were within thirty yards of the men, who discharged their muskets and yelled with the energy of despair. A few of the foremost buffalo fell dead; the others wavered, swerved a little, and finally plunged away on one side, roaring and crashing and stumbling in the darkness over the banks of the creek.

Another danger of camp-life proceeds from rattlesnakes and vipers, which are very susceptible of cold, and at night crawl close to the person of the sleeper for warmth. One officer—a friend of Colonel Dodge's—once found a rattlesnake coiled up beneath his pillow; and another, when drawing on his boot, felt his foot come in contact with a soft substance; he dropped the boot at once, and a huge rattlesnake glided out. Another nocturnal visitor almost as much dreaded as the snakes is the skunk, a horrible little animal about the size of a cat, which makes its way into a camp and has been known to devour the face, hands, or any uncovered part of the nearest sleeper; a skunk-bite being almost invariably followed in certain portions of the Plains by hydrophobia.

The great attraction of the Plains to sportsmen is the variety and abundance of game which they contain. First in order, as being pre-eminently an habitué of the Plains, is the buffalo, or more properly speaking, the bison, and which, in spite of its apparent ferocity, is, according to Colonel Dodge, who knows its habits well, a mild, stupid, inoffensive animal.

The elk, although disappearing even faster than the buffalo, is still to be met with on the Plains; and his great size, magnificent antlers, and splendid form, stamp him as the monarch of the prairies. He is timid, and seldom even in the last extremity employs his great strength in his own defence; what he trusts to is his skill in doubling, dodging, and hiding, which in spite of his size he accomplishes as cunningly and successfully as a hare or a fox. Many varieties of the Deer tribe are found in the Plains; of these the black-tailed deer, the red-deer, and the antelope are the most abundant, affording in the proper season boundless supplies of the most delicious venison. The mountain-sheep can scarcely be called an inhabitant of the Plains; his chosen home being amid the wild crags and rugged fastnesses of mountain-ranges. He is a fine animal, with a body somewhat resembling that of a deer, and a sheep's head surmounted by a pair of stupendous horns. His flesh is declared by the gourmands of the hunting fraternity to be the

choicest of choice morsels, a delicious compound of venison and the finest Southdown mutton.

The prairies abound with smaller animals, rabbits of two kinds, gophers, and prairie-dogs a species of marmot. The carnivora of the Plains are not numerous. First come the wolves, which hunt in packs, but whose power of making themselves disagreeable has, Colonel Dodge thinks, been greatly over-rated. This can scarcely be said of the grisly bear, which is a huge, sagacious, and pre-eminently ferocious brute. The cougar or puma, which is sometimes called the Mexican lion, is also a formidable antagonist to come to close grips with. The panther is very much the same animal on a smaller scale, and is scarcely more dangerous than the wild-cat, which is abundant and of a large size. A variety of birds are found on the Plains, flocks of quails, partridges, geese, and five species of grouse; but none of these can compete in point of size or delicacy with the wild turkey. This magnificent bird when fat is often found to weigh from twenty to twenty-five pounds.

Of the red men, the fast diminishing aborigines of the prairies, Colonel Dodge does not draw a very favourable picture. He paints them, he tells us, as he finds them, not with every attribute softened and toned down by the veil of false sentiment which the romances of Cooper and other novelists have thrown around them. The North American Indian taken as he stands is as cruel, lazy, and degraded a savage as is to be found upon the face of the earth. Virtue, morality, generosity, and honour are not only wanting, but a meaning for him, but have no synonyms in his language. The bad qualities of the Indians are, however, no good reason for the infamous manner in which they have been treated by the agents of the American government.

Intensely conscious of his own helplessness, and conceiving that he is tossed about like a feather between the good and bad god, it is very important for the Indian to discover which of his deities is in the ascendant for the moment; and this he tries to do by divination. There is nothing so trifling but that he may deduce from it a knowledge of the supernatural; the flight of a bird, the bark of a dog, the gliding of a snake through the grass, are all full for him of a subtle intelligence; but what he principally relies upon for information is what he calls the making of a medicine. This species of manufacture, the mysteries of which are known only to himself, is undertaken upon all occasions; and besides these private acts of what may be called devotion, the tribe has from time to time a great medicine-making in common, presided over by a medicine chief. A huge structure of dressed skins called a medicine lodge is set up, with a rude image cut from a log suspended from the roof. A certain number of warriors are then selected from the assembled tribe, and a dance, which may truly be called 'the dance of death,' is begun. Day sinks into night and night dawns into day, and still it goes on without a moment's intermission, till all the performers have fallen senseless to the floor, some to rise no more. If at the end of two or three days this strange ceremony is concluded without a death, the medicine chief pronounces it good medicine, and the tribe separate assured of the protection of the good god.

As soon as an Indian boy becomes a warrior he thinks of a wife; and as an Indian belle is often something of a coquette, he finds, as others have done, that the favours of wooing are 'fashions to seek.' At length, however, the dusky beauty is won, and the favoured lover betakes himself to the father's lodge, and something like the following colloquy ensues. 'You have got a daughter,' begins the lover, 'an ugly lazy thing; but I want a wife, and I am willing as a favour to take her off your hands.'

'Are you speaking of my darling girl?' says the father—the prettiest best girl in the whole tribe. I do not think of giving her to any one, much less to you. Why, you are a mere boy; you have done nothing to speak of; you have not taken one scalp; you have only stolen a few wretched ponies. No, no; she is not for you, unless indeed you give me twenty ponies for her.'

'Twenty ponies!' yells the lover. 'One is too many.' And thus the haggling goes on, until a bargain is struck at something like the fair market-price of the girl, who forthwith, for there is no marriage ceremony, accompanies her new husband or master to his father's lodge. Many families generally live under one roof, and they have not upon an average more than one meal a day. A large pot full of meat is set upon the fire, and when sufficiently cooked is taken off and placed in the middle of the floor. The inmates then gather around and help themselves with their fingers. What is left is set aside, and any one who feels hungry goes and helps himself. The lodge of the Indians is made of dressed buffalo-skins, supported upon a light framework of wood. The fire is in the centre; and as the draught is very defective, the lodge is generally in cold weather full of smoke. The beds are piles of buffalo-ropes and blankets, which serve as seats during the day. Furniture there is none; except a few pots, kettles, and trunks containing the dried meat and superfluous clothing of the family, may be dignified by that term. But what is wanting in upholstery is made up in dirt, everything being kept in a state of inconceivable filth. The wealth of an Indian consists in his horses and mules; and as he leads a nomadic life in fine weather, he rarely burdens himself with anything that is not easily transported. In the general division of meat and skins, the widows and orphans of the tribe are cared for, and a certain portion set aside for their maintenance.

The Indians are very fond of gambling, and also of drinking, which is a very destructive vice to them. Another of their favourite indoor amusements is story-telling, in which they take great delight. A good story-teller is a very important personage in the tribe, and is always surrounded by an eager audience.

The cruelty of the Indians is extreme; men and women alike take an exquisite pleasure in torturing their captives. Much of this cruelty, however, has in latter days arisen from vengeful hatred to the United States government, which has broken faith with them over and over again, and is still conducting a war of extermination. No wonder that under the circumstances the red man should resent the cruelties practised by his invaders, and make reprisals when opportunity offers. It is but fair to the Indians to state, that across the frontier-line in Canada, where the treaties made with them have been rigidly observed, there

have been no Indian wars and no Indian massacres; and that the red men have proved themselves to be quiet and not unthriving subjects of Queen Victoria.

ROBBERY OF AN EXPRESS TRAIN.

THE following story shows the extent to which wholesale plunder may be carried on in the United States of America: About eleven o'clock on the night of Wednesday 19th September, 1877, an express train on the Union Pacific Railway was approaching the little station of Big Springs in Wyoming Territory. There wanted fully a quarter of an hour to the time when it was due, and the station-master William Barnard and his assistant had not yet commenced to prepare for its arrival; the former was still in his office, the latter engaged somewhere about the premises. All was as silent as a station generally is during the intervals between trains; when the stillness was suddenly broken in a manner no less unexpected than unpleasant. The door of the office was burst open, and four men entering, seized the astonished station-master, and told him that if he attempted the slightest resistance or refused to obey their orders, his life should instantly be forfeited. He had no choice but to submit; for he perceived clearly by the words and actions of the intruders that they were members of a large party of robbers, and that the station was completely in their power. They all wore crape masks to conceal their features, but spoke in their natural tones; and as the band consisted of thirteen men fully armed, nothing but compliance with their demands was possible on the part of the station officials. The place was solitary, the hour late; and the robbers lost no time in carrying out their evidently carefully prepared plans. The telegraph apparatus was their first object, and this they compelled the station-master to destroy. Barnard endeavoured to mislead them by only removing a portion of it, but it was of no avail; one of the men angrily desired him to mind what he was about or he would have a bullet through his head, and then ordered him to take out certain parts of the instrument and give them to him; shewing by his knowledge of the terms employed that he must have been a telegraph operator himself. In the meantime the rest of the band had not been idle. They compelled the porter to put out his ordinary signals for the now rapidly advancing train; and they maintained the strictest watch to see that nothing was done that might in the faintest degree create alarm or suspicion.

All fell out exactly as they had anticipated: the train came gradually to a stand in obedience to the signal, and ran blindly into the trap prepared for it. The unconscious passengers, most of whom were asleep, were quite at the mercy of the robbers, who lost not a moment in diligently setting to work to make the most of the golden opportunity before them. The train in the meantime had drawn up at the platform; it was a long one, consisting of a saloon and two Pullman's sleeping-cars, besides ordinary carriages and luggage-vans; and there were a good many passengers, nearly all of them sleeping soundly. A portion of the gang at once made prisoners of the engineer and stoker; while four of them compelled Barnard the station-master to go as he usually did to the

mail-van and knock at the door for admittance. George Miller, the post-office agent in charge of the mails and specie, immediately opened the door, when several of the robbers jumped in, one of them holding a revolver to his head, while the others rapidly cleared the drawers and boxes of all the money they contained; thus securing a very large sum—about forty or fifty thousand dollars. They did not trouble themselves to examine the letters; and a combination-safe containing a very large sum in gold and notes was also left untouched; for it was beyond their power to break it open, and neither Miller the agent nor Patterson the conductor of the train knew the combined intricacies; thus the robbers obliged them to swear on their word of honour.

The gang then directed their attention to the passengers, most of whom were now awake, and beginning to be aware of the unpleasant circumstances in which they were placed. Some were inclined to resist the highwaymen; but the more prudent among them counselled submission, as very few of them had available firearms, and they were ignorant of the strength of the band, and feared more serious consequences if they were driven to resort to extremes. Of the likelihood of this they had an early intimation; for a passenger who chanced to be standing on the outside platform of one of the carriages as the train entered the station, had a couple of pistol-shots fired at him, luckily without doing him any injury. He retreated into the carriage, and was directly followed by the robbers, who entered the car at both ends, and desired the passengers to hold up their hands; a command they all instantly obeyed. They were then rifled one after the other; their pockets being thoroughly searched, watches, purses, and all loose money being taken away. This was done in all the open carriages; but the doors of the two Pullman sleeping-cars being locked, they did not obtain an entrance into either; and the inmates probably thinking discretion the better part of valour, remained ensconced within their shelter. Whether it would long have served as such cannot now be determined; possibly the robbers might have forced the doors had time been allowed them; but fortunately for the travellers the whistle of an approaching goods-train scared the gang, who made a precipitate retreat from the scene of their depredations, carrying their booty along with them.

Believed of their unwelcome presence, the passengers issued forth from the cars and began to relate their various experiences. Luckily no one was seriously wounded. The postal agent had been violently knocked against the carriage-door at the first rush of the thieves, and was considerably bruised, and another man had his forehead grazed by a pistol bullet; but beyond those comparatively trifling injuries they all escaped with the fright and the loss of every article of value on which the robbers had time to lay their hands. Most of the passengers in the open cars were cleared of whatever money they had about them, and several of them lost gold and silver watches; but even in the excitement of the moment a few of them had sufficient presence of mind to enable them hastily to scroto purses and pocket-books, either by slipping them under the cushions or dropping them on the floor. A Jew named Harris was robbed of four hundred and fifty dollars and his

watch; but while raising his hands in obedience to the command of 'Hands up!' he skillfully contrived to drop a roll of notes on the seat beside him, which was overlooked by the robbers as they examined his pockets. A miner who wore a belt containing eleven thousand dollars in gold, was quick enough to fasten it round the waist of his little child, who was not molested by the thieves, and this large sum fortunately escaped their clutches. They managed, however, in the short space of time at their disposal to make some very pretty pickings out of the train; their gains being computed at fully fifty thousand dollars, besides watches and other articles of value.

The scheme had evidently been a most carefully organised one, and was carried out in every detail with perfect coolness and regularity, not a moment being wasted, and the members of the gang having clearly been previously instructed as to the duty each man was to perform. It is supposed they had fastened their horses somewhere at the back of the station, as on quitting the train they immediately disappeared without leaving any traces behind them.

An alarm was at once given, and several parties started in pursuit; but their search was entirely unsuccessful so far as regarded hearing any tidings of the robbers. The following day a band of searchers found among the mountains ten or twelve miles from the station of Big Springs, a rifle, a pistol, and an empty money-box; proving indisputably that the highwaymen had passed that way. It was well known that some very notorious Missouri bandits were at large among the Black Hills, and it is believed that they were the perpetrators of the attack on the train. A large reward was offered for their apprehension; but so far as we know, they have hitherto managed to elude all pursuit, and it is doubtful whether they may ever be brought to justice. With such possible contingencies, travelling by the Union Pacific, or any other railway in the Far West, is not a pleasant idea to contemplate.

POPULAR ERRORS REGARDING THE SHREW-MOUSE.

No popular error is more absolutely destitute of foundation than that regarding the shrew. This little quadruped, very common in meadows and pastures in all parts of Britain, and generally known as the shrew-mouse, is as harmless as any creature that lives. Its food consists of insects and their larvæ; and its teeth are very small, so that it is scarcely able to bite through the human skin. Yet according to a popular belief, very widely prevalent, its bite is most venomous, and in many districts in England the viper is less feared. Nor is it only its bite that is supposed to be deadly to man or beast. Contact with it in any way is accounted extremely dangerous; and cattle seized with any malady, especially if shewing any appearance of numbness in the legs, are apt to be reputed 'shrew-struck.' Horses in particular are accounted very liable to suffer from this cause. An infallible cure, however, was to be found in dragging the shrew-struck animal through a bramble rooted at both ends, or

in the application of a twig of a shrew-ash. 'A shrew-ash,' says White, in his *Natural History of Selborne*, 'is an ash whose twigs or branches, when gently applied to the limbs of cattle, will immediately relieve the pain which a beast suffers from the running of a shrew-mouse over the part affected; for it is supposed that a shrew-mouse is of so baneful and deleterious a nature, that whenever it creeps over a beast, whether it be horse, cow, or sheep, the suffering animal is afflicted with cruel anguish, and threatened with the loss of the use of its limbs. Against this accident, to which they were continually liable, our provident forefathers always kept a shrew-ash at hand, which, when once medicated, would maintain its virtue for ever.' This tree, whose every branch possessed such a potent charm, was an ash in the trunk of which an anger-hole had been bored, and a living shrew put into the hole, which was then closed with a wooden plug. The incantations used when this was done have now been forgotten; but the shrew-ash has lost its old repute; but the belief in its virtues still lingers in some quarters, and the belief in the dangerous bite and maleficent touch of the shrew is strong among the country-people in many parts of England. How confidently this belief was entertained even by the best educated in former times appears from many allusions to it by old authors. It was received as an unquestionable fact of natural history. In Topsel's *History of Four-footed Beasts and Serpents*, published in 1658, it is said of the shrew, that 'it is a ravelling beast, feigning itself gentle and tame; but being touched, it biteth deep and poisoneth deadly; it beareth a cruel mind, desiring to hurt anything; with much more of the like nature, and much concerning medicinal virtues ascribed to this little animal. But the belief in the deadliness of the shrew's bite has been transmitted from one generation to another from times far more remote than those of this credulous author. It prevailed among the ancient Romans, and their remedy for a shrew's bite was to cut the body of the little creature asunder and place it on the injured part.

FLOATING-LIGHTS.

BESIDES the lighthouses which warn the sailor of danger and guide him in his course amidst the darkness of night, there are along the British coasts numerous floating-lights or light-vessels in situations where the erection of a lighthouse is impossible, where there are banks or shoals perilous to ships but affording no foundation for a building. These vessels ride at anchor in places that have been selected for them, and which are as exactly marked on the charts as the positions of the lighthouses. Most of them are stationed off the east coast of England from the mouth of the Humber southward; a few on other parts of the English coast, and on that of Ireland; and two on the coast of Scotland. They are generally vessels of about one hundred and fifty tons, specially constructed with a view to their riding safely at anchor in exposed situations and during

the most severe storms, without regard to sailing-powers, of which they have no need; and it has been an extremely rare thing for any of them to be driven from their moorings or to experience any disaster. The mariner counts upon the guidance of their light in any weather, as confidently as he does on that of a lighthouse built upon a rock.

The English floating-lights, like the English lighthouses, are under the care and management of Trinity House. From the Appendix to the Report of the Royal Commission on Lights, Buoys, and Beacons, presented to the Houses of Parliament in 1861, we obtain some interesting information concerning them. They are each provided with a crew of eleven men, who have no occupation but their professional duties; and of whom there are at all times seven on board the vessel, and four on shore, employed in the store-houses at the Trinity Buoy Wharf, Blackwall. The men remain on shore for a month at a time. Each vessel has a master and mate, but these are never on duty at the same time; taking the command in turn, month about. No men are employed in this service but such as are already good sailors; and the men rise by seniority from the lowest rank to that of master, so that there is a strong inducement for them to continue in the service. Misconduct of any kind—as disobedience of the orders of the master or mate, quarrelling, breach of regulations, neglect of duty, or intoxication when on shore—is punished by censure, degradation to a lower rank, or dismissal from the service, according to the gravity of the offence. The lowest wage of the men is only two pounds fifteen shillings per month—at least so it was in 1861, and we have heard of no change. The master has five pounds per month and an allowance of ten pounds a year for house-rent. All find their own provisions. They are allowed to use beer on board the vessel, but no spirits. They are completely secluded from the rest of the world, whilst on duty. No boats are allowed to go alongside the light-vessels, and the men are strictly forbidden to go on board any passing ship. A library is supplied to each vessel.

Life in a light-vessel one would think must be rather monotonous; but many of those who enter the service remain long in it. Small pensions are allowed to superannuated men or those disabled by disease or accident. The lantern used to be hung from the yard-arm of the vessel, but in 1807 Mr R. Stevenson introduced at the floating-light at the Bell Rock the mode now used, in which the lantern surrounds the mast, sliding up and down on it, and is elevated to the top of it when lighted. Those light-vessels which occupy the most exposed stations ride more easily, if the water is deep, than those which are tossed by smaller but more frequent waves. The latter must sometimes be rather unpleasant abodes. The master of the Owers light-vessel, in the English Channel, between Beachy Head and the Isle of Wight, told the members of the Royal Commission who visited his vessel in 1859, that in bad weather he sometimes 'could not lie on the floor of his cabin without holding on to the legs of the table.'

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A VOYAGE IN THE *SUNBEAM*.

WE have not for a long time perused a more lively and interesting book than that written by Mrs Brassey, purporting to be an account of her voyage round the world, in the yacht named the *Sunbeam*. The lady was accompanied by her husband, Mr Thomas Brassey, M.P., also her children and a few private friends. The yacht, a handsomely fitted up and commodious vessel, possessed three masts, and had a powerful sailing capacity, but was provided with a screw and steam-power, to be used as occasion required.

Though laying no claim to literary skill, Mrs Brassey writes pleasingly in the form of a diary; and she may be complimented on her untiring energy in bearing fatigue, and the good taste with which she describes the multiplicity of scenes and circumstances calling for observation. Mr Brassey, usually called Tom in the narrative, was his own navigator, which infers no small degree of nautical knowledge; and we are led to believe that this was not his first expedition with the *Sunbeam*. He was, of course, assisted by a sailing-master, a boatswain, and engineer, besides a crew of at least twenty able-bodied seamen; the full complement being made up by a steward and stewardess, cooks, nurse, lady's-maid, and other domestics.

One can fancy the pleasurable excitement in preparing for a year's voyage of this kind, the arrangements to be made, the articles to be taken; the hopes probably predominating over the fears, the farewells on going on board. It is the fate of few to have so splendid a chance of making a tour of the globe, carrying from clime to clime not a few of the comforts of home—an elegant saloon for daily resort, a library of seven hundred volumes for amusing reading, nicely fitted-up cabins, baths, a first-rate cuisine and larder, everything else to make life pass away agreeably; letters of introduction, abundant means, liberty to sail where and when you like. What more could anybody desire? Such is yacht-life. It was brought to perfection in the *Sunbeam*. Looking to the elegant form of the vessel, and

the large quantity of sail she carried, we can form an idea of her great speed when running before a favourable wind. The only drawback, it can be supposed, was the small draught of water, about nine feet, wherefore in rough weather there must have been a considerable tumbling about. However, that is what will be expected in yachting, which differs materially from performing a voyage in large sea-going ships.

The *Sunbeam*, sailing from the Thames, set out on the 1st July 1876, and steering westward by the Isle of Wight, suffered some rough weather in getting into the Atlantic. On the 13th there was a cry of a 'sail on the port-beam;' but on investigation it proved to be an abandoned vessel tossed about on the ocean, with masts gone, and the sea washing over the half-broken-up deck. This unfortunate derelict was visited; it had been laden with wine, of which several casks were carried away, and then it was left to its fate; though, had time permitted to take the hulk into port, a considerable salvage might have been realised. The party were beginning to settle down. At meals there was much pleasant talk; Mrs Brassey read and wrote a good deal, and learned Spanish; one of the gentlemen taught the children, and the commissariat department was satisfactory. The land first reached was Madeira. At Funchal, the vessel dropped anchor; and with jaunting about to see the island, there was a stay of several days. Many friends came on board before departure, and 'all admired the yacht very much, particularly the various cosy corners in the deck-house.'

On the 20th July, off for the Canary Islands; and these being reached, there was an expedition on horseback to the Peak of Teneriffe. Tremendous as was the ascent of a mountain which rises eleven thousand four hundred and sixty-six feet above the level of the sea, Mrs Brassey did not shrink from the undertaking. She, however, did not attempt to climb the cone of five hundred and thirty feet, composed as it is of hot ashes, into which the feet sink at every step, while sulphurous vapours pour from the various fissures. View from the summit magnificent. Of the picturesque

scenery drawings and photographs were taken. Teneriffe being exhausted, off went the *Sunbeam*, still holding in a southerly direction by the Cape de Verde Islands.

Rio de Janeiro, on the coast of South America, was reached on the 18th August. A graphic account is given of excursions in Brazil. The eye everywhere was struck with the brilliant colours of the humming-birds, flowers, and butterflies. Palm, orange, lemon, and citron trees were among the common objects of vegetation. A variation in the general amusement consisted of a voyage up the River Plate and a journey on the Pampas. Splendid country, and well farmed, but under what an infliction—the locusts. Of these terrible creatures Mrs Brassey heard a good deal, and she longed to see them, and her wish was gratified. She says: 'In the course of our ride we saw in the distant sky what looked very much like a heavy purple thunder-cloud, but which the experienced pronounced to be a swarm of locusts. It seemed impossible; but as we proceeded they met us, first singly, and then in gradually increasing numbers, until each step became positively painful, owing to the smart blows we received from them on our heads, faces, and hands. . . As the locusts passed between us and the sun they completely obscured the light; a little later, with the sun's rays shining directly on their wings, they looked like a golden cloud, such as one sometimes sees in the transformation scene in a pantomime.' We pass over much that is described in the Argentine Republic, as of little or no interest in this country.

The *Sunbeam* set off in its course southwards on September 28th. While lying down to rest after breakfast, Mrs Brassey was summoned to come on deck to see a ship which had signalled being on fire. A boat being despatched to discover the condition of affairs, the vessel was found to be the *Montshaven*, sixty days out from Swansea, bound for Valparaiso with a cargo of smelting-coal, which had taken fire by the spontaneous ignition of gases. As it was evident that the unfortunate ship could not be saved, prompt assistance was given in bringing the crew on board the *Sunbeam*. 'The poor fellows,' says Mrs Brassey, 'were almost wild with joy at getting alongside another ship, after all the hardships they had gone through, and in their excitement they threw overboard many things which they might as well have kept, as they had taken the trouble to bring them. Our boat made three trips altogether; and by half-past six we had them all safe on board, with most of their effects, and the ship's chronometers, charts, and papers. . . While we were at dinner the ship was blazing like a tar-barrel.' The last time the *Montshaven* was seen, she was burned down nearly to the water's edge. From the information given respecting the ill-fated ship, it was learned that a large American steamer had passed quite close to her, and disregarding signals of distress, had steamed away southward, leaving all on board to their fate. The kind attention shewn by Mr Brassey comes strongly out in contrast with such heartless conduct. The unexpected addition of the crew of the *Montshaven* to those on board the *Sunbeam* proved a trial on the commissariat, but the difficulty was overcome. The inconvenience was fortunately for only a few days. The *Nimani*, one of the Pacific Company's mail-steamers, came

in sight on the route for England, and to this vessel the crew of the *Montshaven* were consigned. Besides affording this relief, 'the captain of the *Nimani* kindly gave us half a bullock, killed this morning, a dozen live ducks and chickens, and the latest newspapers.'

On the 6th October, the *Sunbeam* was off the coast of Patagonia; the rugged mountains of Tierra del Fuego rose on the sky, and now the yacht shaped its course for the Straits of Magellan. To get through these tortuous narrows is reckoned one of the clever feats in navigation. There are many sunken rocks to be avoided, and the natives scattered about the coast are not to be relied on. The scenery, which is described as singularly picturesque, is well represented in some beautiful illustrations.

The narrow channels were got through on the 12th October; the sun pierced through the clouds, and the broad Pacific was in view. What a triumph in navigation to have piloted 'the yacht through the Straits, for it would do credit, not only to any amateur, but to a professional seaman.' Sails were hoisted; and now begins what we deem to be the most amusing part of the work; for after touching at Valparaiso, the voyaging was among the groups of islands which, dotting the Pacific, lie basking in the profuse beauty of the tropics. Valparaiso, the most important trading town of Chili, left some agreeable impressions. Several English gentlemen were solicitous that the party should stay for a few days; and there were excursions in the neighbourhood. An emporium of Panama hats was visited. These hats are a curiosity, and are worn by almost everybody on the coast. They are made of 'a special kind of grass, split very fine,' and are sold at an extraordinary price; fifty to sixty guineas being not an unusual price for a single hat, though some are sold at a cheaper rate. Their recommendation is that they are light, pliable, and so enduring that they will almost last for ever. Very wonderful hats, as Mrs Brassey thinks, but gravely adds, that where 'so many hats are lost overboard, they would prove rather an unprofitable investment.' Some curious details are given respecting the abundance of eggs, which are offered in profusion at meals. Eggs on all occasions are the order of the day, and poultry in superlative abundance. Valparaiso, in short, is the paradise of eggs. It is stated that there are good shops, but everything is 'frightfully dear.' We can at all events say that there is a considerable import of English books and periodicals.

The route adopted from Valparaiso was westward to the Society Islands, lying in nearly the twentieth degree of south latitude. They may be said to be at the very middle of the Pacific, and out of the way of general navigation. It was a charming sail, but rather slow work; and looking to the great stretch of ocean to be traversed, there were qualms of feeling as to how provisions and water would last—fear that there will have to be a dependence on potted meats; and talking of these meats, we are assured that none at all equal those of American preparation. Slipping on at the rate of five miles an hour under sail, but sometimes accelerated by a breeze, the *Sunbeam* went onward night and day with nothing to look at but the ocean and sky. Much time was spent in reading, and there was some amuse-

ment in noticing the paroquets, monkeys, and other pet animals that had been domesticated on board. On Sundays, as was customary throughout, all hands were summoned for Divine service, just as at home in England. The length of the service depended on the weather. When circumstances permitted, Mr Brassey read a sermon in addition to the usual prayers. One likes to read of these continued acknowledgments of Divine care by a whole ship's company, amidst the perils of the deep.

The Society Islands were reached on the 26th November. For the very interesting account of these islands we must refer to what is described by Mrs Brassey. But for the rise of coral reefs, these islands would scarcely have an existence. This is one of the wonders of nature. Our authoress is at a loss to describe the beauty of the scene. 'Submarine coral forests of every colour, studded with sea-flowers, anemones, and echinidae, of a brilliancy only to be seen in dreamland; shoals of the brightest and swiftest fish darting and flashing in and out; shells, every one of which was fit to hold the place of honour in a conchologist's collection, moving slowly along with their living inmates, this is what we saw when we looked down from the side of the boat into the depths below.' On landing at one of the islands, the party were hospitably received by the natives. Piles of cocoa-nuts, fish, and fowls were laid down as presents at their feet. From the cocoanuts they were refreshed by a drink of cool milk offered for their acceptance. For these gifts there was a proper requital. Mrs Brassey says: 'The women were gentle and kind, and were delighted with some beads, looking-glasses, and knives I gave them; in return for which they brought us quantities of beautiful shells.' At the island of Tahiti there was a similar exchange of courtesies. Papeete is described as quite a town, with a market affording an immense choice of articles for sale.

The pleasures of a tropical clime are unfortunately apt to be marred by certain torments. During the rainy season, water falls in solid masses which no temporary shelter can withstand; that, however, is nothing in comparison with the invasion of insects. A small party which set out on an American voyage for a drive of two days round Tahiti, passed the night at an inn where the insect pest was experienced in an unmistakable way. The rooms were swarming with cockroaches 'about three inches long,' which climbed the walls and were seen in every crevice. 'Then there were the mosquitoes, who hummed and buzzed about us, and with whom, alas! we were doomed to have a closer acquaintance. Our bed was fitted with the very thickest calico mosquito curtains, impervious to the air, but not to the venomous little insects, who found their way through every tiny opening in spite of all our efforts to exclude them. . . . Amidst suffocating heat, in the moonlight, were seen columns of nasty brown cockroaches ascending the bed-posts, crawling along the top of the curtains, dropping with a thud on the bed, and then descending over the side to the ground.' Being unable to stand it any longer, Mrs Brassey rose, emptied her slippers of the cockroaches, seized on her garments, and fled to the garden; whence, however, she was driven back by torrents of rain. Such is a picture

of certain inconveniences in these tropical islands. Prodigious beauty of vegetation, flowers magnificent, all seemingly a kind of paradise—but the plague of insects.

Making a run northwards, the *Sunbeam* reached Hawaii, one of the Sandwich Islands, on the 23d December. Here was the same profusion and beauty of flowers. The women and girls are described as being gaily decorated with wreaths and garlands, and wearing a dress of a very simple yet not inelegant fashion, consisting of a coloured long-sleeved loose gown reaching to the feet—no tying at the waist, all flowing and free, with no restraint in walking or sitting down. Our space does not permit us to follow the movements of the party in their excursions through interesting scenery. Hawaii, like all the other islands in the group, is of volcanic origin. Kilauea, which is still raging, is reckoned to be the largest volcano in the world, for its crater is nine miles in circumference. This extraordinary volcano, situated at the top of a mountain six thousand feet above the level of the sea, was visited by Mrs Brassey, although the journey to it is fatiguing, and the approach to it is attended with some peril. There happens to be a comfortable inn near the brink of the crater, at which travellers are accommodated and are furnished with guides to conduct them with safety to points of interest.

According to Mrs Brassey's account, the scene was horribly grand. 'We were standing on the extreme edge of a precipice, overhanging a lake of molten fire, a hundred feet below us, and nearly a mile across. Looking against the cliffs on the opposite side, with a noise like the roar of a stormy ocean, waves of blood-red, fiery, liquid lava hurled their billows upon an iron-bound headland, and then rushed up the face of the cliffs to toss their gory spray high in the air. The restless heaving lake boiled and bubbled, never remaining the same for two minutes together. . . . There was an island on one side of the lake, which the fiery waves seemed to attack unceasingly with relentless fury, as if bent on hurling it from its base. On the other side was a large cavern, into which the burning mass rushed with a loud roar, breaking down in its impetuous headlong career the gigantic stalactites that overhung the mouth of the cave, and flinging up the liquid material for the formation of new ones. It was all terribly grand, magnificently sublime; but no words could adequately describe such a scene.'

Perhaps the specimens now presented will incline readers to undertake a thorough perusal of this unique and interesting work, which (published by Longman) we doubt not will be found at all the libraries. The route homewards of the *Sunbeam* from Hawaii was by way of Japan, the China Sea, the Straits of Malacca, Ceylon, the Bay of Bengal, the Red Sea, the Suez Canal, and the Mediterranean, about all which there are many amusing details. As regards the traffic on the Suez Canal, the gratifying fact is mentioned, that on the day the *Sunbeam* entered the Canal, the sum of six thousand pounds was taken as dues at the Suez office alone. The climate of the Mediterranean, which we are in the habit of extolling as beneficial to invalids from northern countries, suited badly, as we are told, with the delicate constitution of the pet animals brought

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The narrow channels were got through on the 12th October; the sun pierced through the clouds, and the broad Pacific was in view. What a triumph in navigation to have piloted 'the yacht through the Straits, for it would do credit, not only to any amateur, but to a professional seaman.' Sails were hoisted; and now begins what we deem to be the most amusing part of the work; for after touching at Valparaiso, the voyaging was among the groups of islands which, dotting the Pacific, lie basking in the profuse beauty of the tropics. Valparaiso, the most important trading town of Chili, left some agreeable impressions. Several English gentlemen were solicitous that the party should stay for a few days; and there were excursions in the neighbourhood. An emporium of Panama hats was visited. These hats are a curiosity, and are worn by almost everybody on the coast. They are made of 'a special kind of grass, split very fine,' and are sold at an extraordinary price; fifty to sixty guineas being not an unusual price for a single hat, though some are sold at a cheaper rate. Their recommendation is that they are light, pliable, and so enduring that they will almost last for ever. Very wonderful hats, as Mrs Brassey thinks, but gravely adds, that where 'so many hats are lost overboard, they would prove rather an unprofitable investment.' Some curious details are given respecting the abundance of eggs, which are offered in profusion at meals. Eggs on all occasions are the order of the day, and poultry in superlative abundance. Valparaiso, in short, is the paradise of eggs. It is stated that there are good shops, but everything is 'frightfully dear.' We can at all events say that there is a considerable import of English books and periodicals.

The route adopted from Valparaiso was westward to the Society Islands, lying in nearly the twentieth degree of south latitude. They may be said to be at the very middle of the Pacific, and out of the way of general navigation. It was a charming sail, but rather slow work; and looking to the great stretch of ocean to be traversed, there were qualms of feeling as to how provisions and water would last—fear that there will have to be a dependence on potted meats; and talking of these meats, we are assured that none at all equal those of American preparation. Slipping on at the rate of five miles an hour under sail, but sometimes accelerated by a breeze, the *Sunbeam* went onward night and day with nothing to look at but the ocean and sky. Much time was spent in reading, and there was some amuse-

ment in noticing the paroquets, monkeys, and other pet animals that had been domesticated on board. On Sundays, as was customary throughout, all hands were summoned for Divine service, just as at home in England. The length of the service depended on the weather. When circumstances permitted, Mr Brassey read a sermon in addition to the usual prayers. One likes to read of these continued acknowledgments of Divine care by a whole ship's company, amidst the perils of the deep.

The Society Islands were reached on the 26th November. For the very interesting account of these islands we must refer to what is described by Mrs Brassey. But for the rise of coral reefs, these islands would scarcely have an existence. This is one of the wonders of nature. Our authoress is at a loss to describe the beauty of the scene. 'Submarine coral forests of every colour, studded with sea-flowers, anemones, echinoids, of a brilliancy only to be seen in dreamland; shoals of the brightest and swiftest fish darting and flashing in and out; shells, every one of which was fit to hold the place of honour in a conchologist's collection, moving slowly along with their living inmates: this is what we saw when we looked down from the side of the boat into the depths below.' On landing at one of the islands, the party were hospitably received by the natives. Piles of coconuts, fish, and fowls were laid down as presents at their feet. From the coconuts they were refreshed by a drink of cool milk offered for their acceptance. For these gifts there was a proper reward. Mrs Brassey says: 'The women were gentle and kind, and were delighted with some beads, looking-glasses, and knives I gave them; in return for which they brought us quantities of beautiful shells.' At the island of Tahiti there was a similar exchange of courtesies. Papeete is described as quite a town, with a market affording an immense choice of articles for sale.

The pleasures of a tropical clime are unfortunately apt to be marred by certain torments. During the rainy season, water falls in solid masses which no temporary shelter can withstand; that, however, is nothing in comparison with the invasion of insects. A small party which set out in an American wagon for a drive of two days round Tahiti, passed the night at an inn where the insect pest was experienced in an unmistakable way. The rooms were swarming with cockroaches 'about three inches long,' which climbed the walls and were seen in every crevice. 'Then there were the mosquitoes, who hummed and buzzed about us, and with whom, alas! we were doomed to have a closer acquaintance. Our bed was fitted with the very thickest calico mosquito curtains, impervious to the air, but not to the venomous little insects, who found their way through every tiny opening in spite of all our efforts to exclude them. . . . Amidst suffocating heat, in the moonlight, were seen columns of dusty brown cockroaches ascending the bed-posts, crawling along the top of the curtains, dropping with a thud on the bed, and then descending over the side to the ground.' Being unable to stand it any longer, Mrs Brassey rose, emptied her slippers of the cockroaches, seized on her garments, and fled to the garden; whence, however, she was driven back by torrents of rain. Such is a picture

of certain inconveniences in these tropical islands. Prodigious beauty of vegetation, flowers magnificent, all seemingly a kind of paradise—but the plague of insects.

Making a run northwards, the *Sunbeam* reached Hawaii, one of the Sandwich Islands, on the 22d December. Here was the same profusion and beauty of flowers. The women and girls are described as being gaily decorated with wreaths and garlands, and wearing a dress of a very simple yet not inelegant fashion, consisting of 'a coloured long-sleeved loose gown reaching to the feet'—no tying at the waist, all flowing and free, with no restraint in walking or sitting down. Our space does not permit us to follow the movements of the party in their excursions through interesting scenery. Hawaii, like all the other islands in the group, is of volcanic origin. Kilauea, which is still raging, is reckoned to be the largest volcano in the world, for its crater is nine miles in circumference. This extraordinary volcano, situated at the top of a mountain six thousand feet above the level of the sea, was visited by Mrs Brassey, although the journey to it is fatiguing, and the approach to it is attended with some peril. There happens to be a comfortable inn near the brink of the crater, at which travellers are accommodated and are furnished with guides to conduct them with safety to points of interest.

According to Mrs Brassey's account, the scene was horribly grand. 'We were standing on the extreme edge of a precipice, overhanging a lake of molten fire, a hundred feet below us, and nearly a mile across. Dashing against the cliffs on the opposite side, with a noise like the roar of a stormy ocean, waves of blood-red, fiery, liquid lava hurled their billows upon an iron-bound headland, and then rushed up the face of the cliffs to toss their gory spray high in the air. The restless heaving lake boiled and bubbled, never remaining the same for two minutes together. . . . There was an island on one side of the lake, which the fiery waves seemed to attack unceasingly with relentless fury, as if bent on hurling it from its base. On the other side was a large cavern, into which the burning mass rushed with a loud roar, breaking down in its impetuous headlong career the gigantic stalactites that overhung the mouth of the cave, and flinging up the liquid material for the formation of new ones. It was all terribly grand, magnificently sublime; but no words could adequately describe such a scene.'

Perhaps the specimens now presented will incline readers to undertake a thorough perusal of this unique and interesting work, which (published by Longman) we doubt not will be found at all the libraries. The route homewards of the *Sunbeam* from Hawaii was by way of Japan, the China Sea, the Straits of Malacca, Ceylon, the Bay of Bengal, the Red Sea, the Suez Canal, and the Mediterranean, about all which there are many amusing details. As regards the traffic on the Suez Canal, the gratifying fact is mentioned, that on the day the *Sunbeam* entered the Canal, the sum of six thousand pounds was taken as dues at the Suez office alone. The climate of the Mediterranean, which we are in the habit of extolling as beneficial to invalids from northern countries, suited badly, as we are told, with the delicate constitution of the pet animals brought

from the South Pacific and other warm regions. Although tended with great care, several pined and died, from the effects of acute bronchitis or other ailments, after passing Malta. All these victims to a change of climate 'were placed together in a neat little box, and committed to the deep at sunset, a few tears being shed over the departed pets, especially by the children.'

Mrs Brassey with her family and friends reached home—a palatial mansion on the south coast of England, near Hastings—on the morning of the 27th May 1877. In the whole voyage round the world, no hitch nor any misadventure had occurred. We can imagine that the expedition will have left an agreeable topic of conversation for life, and that its surprising success will inspire others equally qualified to follow the brilliant example offered by 'A Voyage in the *Sunbeam*.'

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE

CHAPTER XXV.—AT THE PHEASANTRY.

'I HAVE letters to write—one to the Lord-lieutenant in particular, on county business,' said the Earl, smiling, and addressing himself to Captain Denzil; 'otherwise I daresay that I too should have been able to find something worth the showing you out of doors. As it is, you young people must go without me.'

Jasper, who had a lazy man's horror of improved implements, Dutch dairies, new patent draining-tiles, and cattle-food, and who knew the Earl's passion for farming, felt inwardly grateful to the Lord-lieutenant for detaining his noble host within doors. The Countess had not the slightest intention of accompanying her guests in their visit to the pheasantry. Except in a carriage, or in dry weather among the well-rolled paths of the rose-garden, Lady Wolverhampton scarcely ever left the house. Her age, though she looked younger, was within a year or two of that of her lord, and he was by far the stronger of the two. Indeed it was mainly due to her declining health and growing incapacity for exertion that the 'High Tor' family had for this year foregone what most persons of their rank regard less as a pleasure than as a duty, the passing of at least a portion of the season in London.

The party from Carbery Chase had been very cordially received. People can afford yet to cultivate the old-fashioned quality of cordiality in rural retirement, where it answers to detect hidden merits and to see in the best light the things and persons in the midst of which and whom our lives have to be passed.

'I am glad,' said the Countess, 'that Captain Denzil was able to come over with you to-day, my dears.'

With Sir Sykes's two daughters the mistress of High Tor was on sufficiently familiar terms; but their brother's character was not quite so much esteemed by the De Vere family as were theirs. Still, in the country, a young man and an elder son is *per se* a being of some importance, and to Jasper, with his arm yet in the black silken sling, there attached somewhat of romance, on account of his late accident and the adventurous way in which he had incurred it. He had not been expected, and his presence at High Tor was taken as a compliment.

Scarcely had the Ladies Maud and Gladys De Vere had time to don the pretty hats that so well set off the comeliness of the one and the bright beauty of the other, before their brother came into the room. Lord Harrogate had a riding-whip in his hand, and a long ride over the purple moorlands in prospect; but he was easily induced to defer it, and to make one of the party, that presently sauntered across the park towards a sunny sandy nook, screened from cold north winds by a friendly belt of fir and pine, where the new pheasantry had been established.

Near to the place where a footpath led to a sequestered dell, the new governess Miss Gray and her pupil met the group of advancing sight-seers. Ethel would have passed on with a quiet graceful bow of recognition; but Lady Alice had no notion of being thus shelved.

'You are going to look at the pheasants,' she said; 'and we have just seen them. They seem rather frightened, but so very pretty!'

The words which young Lady Alice had employed when speaking of the exotic birds would have been singularly appropriate to Ethel Gray. The new governess looked timid and something more than pretty during the general hand-shaking and interchange of civil conventional phrases which now ensued. Jasper, whose acquaintance with Ethel was of the slightest, had contented himself with lifting his hat; but he had stared at her beautiful face with as cool a steadiness of gaze as though she had been a picture or a statue. Why Lord Harrogate should have resented this, it would have been no easy matter for his lordship to explain; but there was scorn, and anger too, in the glance which he shot at unconscious Jasper; while it was not without some embarrassment that he addressed a word or two of polite commonplace to Miss Gray. Then the governess and her pupil pursued their way to the house, and the rest of the party strolled on towards the pheasantry.

'How handsome she is!' exclaimed honest Lucy Denzil, looking back after the angular form of Lady Alice, and the graceful figure that contrasted so strongly with the bony awkwardness of the school-girl; and Lady Maud echoed the praise, and Lady Gladys smiled approval. The Earl's second daughter was, as has been said, very lovely, and her golden hair and blue eyes had produced the usual effect of fascinating for the time being Jasper's fickle fancy. It is quite possible to be very hard and at the same time very weak where women are concerned; and Captain Denzil, wary man of the world as he boasted himself to be, and selfish as he certainly was, could not at the moment resist the spell of the enchantress.

'Cripple as I am,' said Jasper, glancing at his injured arm, 'you see that I could not resist the temptation to come when you asked me.'

'They are not my pheasants; they are Maud's, you know,' returned Lady Gladys, as though willfully misunderstanding him.

'Fortunate birds!—that is if you condescend to take an interest in them,' said the captain, nonchalant as ever, but contriving to throw into his tone and look a something of suppressed tenderness, that was not perhaps wholly feigned. Ruth Willis saw the look, although she was not near enough to overhear the words, and her eyes flashed and her white teeth closed sharply, almost

savagely, on her pouting lip. She felt the mortification which an angler might feel did he see the half-hooked salmon, the silvery patriarch of the pool, desert his bait, and leap provokingly at the artificial fly of some rival disciple of Piscator. She could not forget how, an hour or two ago, the heir of Carbery had deigned to devote to her service those very tricks of manner—in her anger she mentally called them so—which now before her very eyes he was practising for the benefit of another. She did not care for him; but he piqued her, by the very effrontery of his tickleness, into attaching to him a value which in calmer moments she would never have set on one so intrinsically base as Jasper Denizil.

In spite of world-old experience and sage aphorisms, each sex remains to some extent a standing problem to the other. So Ruth Willis, nettled, baffled, wrathful, still did not fathom the depths of Jasper's worthless nature one half so clearly as she would have done had her keen powers of observation been exercised at the expense of a woman. She even felt angry with Lady Gladys, though most unreasonably, for the proud beauty wore her most glacial armour of chilling haughtiness when she perceived that Jasper was disposed to pay her what is popularly known as 'marked attentions.'

The innocent pheasants, the ostensible end and object of this expedition, were duly inspected, and lavishly fed with the millet and barley, the chopped eggs and crushed maize, which young pheasants love. They were fair enough to look upon, these shy pretty captives, still timorous and bewildered by their close confinement in the darksome baskets wherein they had been crammed by the irreverent poultry-merchant who had consigned them to High Tor; and not yet quite at home in their new abode, which had been so freshly decorated for their reception that the paint on the wood and the lacquer on the wires were barely dry. Golden pheasants there were, and white or silver pheasants, and pencilled pheasants, worthy descendants of a feathered ancestry that had pecked and strutted in the gardens of coral-buttoned mandarins, in far-off China.

The curious thing was, that except by their mistress Lady Maud and the elder of the two Denizil girls, who was a kindred spirit, the pheasants were scarcely looked at with regardful eyes. Is it not always so? At lanch or military review or polo-match, or when a princely trowel of pure gold condescendingly applies a dab of sublime mortar to a glorified foundation-stone of some new building, how very, very few of the nominal spectators concentrate their thoughts and their vision on the show, which the reporters will presently describe with such graphic power! Private affairs, hopes, fears, interests, are all of them petty magnets sufficient to neutralise the great avowed attraction of the hour.

There was Ruth Willis, her whole attention stealthily concentrating itself upon Captain Denizil at the side of the Earl's second daughter; there was Jasper, vainly trying to thaw the ice of Lady Gladys's disdain; and Lord Harrogate, whose thoughts seemed at times to wander away from the present scene and company. Add to these Helene Denizil, sorrowfully conscious that Lord Harrogate himself, in whose eyes she would have given much to find favour, was thinking of any-

thing rather than of her preference for him, and it will be seen that the real amateurs of fancy pheasants were but in a narrow minority.

A good girl who loves a man worthy of her esteem, yet who is constrained by maiden modesty and the rules of good-breeding to hide away the sentiment as though it were a sin, deserves more pity than often falls to her lot. It is never Leap-year for her. She cannot be the first to speak. And if there be one point upon which men are exceptionally blind, it is to the perception that their merits may be highly appreciated by some young lady to whom they never give a thought when absent from her. Poor Blanche had trouble enough now and then to keep down the rising tears that welled up to her eyes as she noted twenty signs of the painful fact that Lord Harrogate regarded her with that amiable indifference which cannot readily ripen, as dislike sometimes can, into love. But Blanche was too gentle to grow bitter over a disappointment, as did Ruth Willis, although for her too the pleasure of the day was damped and dulled.

The visitors from Carbery would not, on getting back to the broad gravelled drive where the basket-carriage awaited them, re-enter the house. They had taken leave of the Earl and Countess, and declined all hospitable proffers of luncheon beforehand. There was some kissing among the girls and a good deal of hand-shaking, and then the 'double basket' again received its living load, and 'good-bye' was said, and off dashed the mettled Exmoor ponies under Lady Denizil's guidance.

Two of the party from the Chase carried back with them to Carbery hearts that were heavier than when they had first set out for the projected visit to the pheasantry at High Tor. Sir Sykes's ward, so talkative two hours ago, had become sullenly mute. Ruth Willis was smarting under her defeat, for she had measured herself with Lady Gladys, and could not but acknowledge to herself that her own elfish piquancy was quite thrown into the shade by the superior charms of the Earl's daughter. Blanche was sad and thoughtful. Jasper, twisting his well-waxed moustache, seemed unaware, in the preoccupation of his own mind, that Ruth was resentful and Blanche melancholy, while Miss Denizil frankly wondered why conversation languished as it did. Excellent Lucy had no by-play to distract her attention from the object of the expedition; she had seen the birds and chatted with her friend, and was mildly gratified with her outing. Nevertheless it was but a silent party that the Exmoor ponies whisked back along the well-kept road that led to Carbery Chase.

CHAPTER XXVI.—THE NEW BROOD.

'Clever enough, and too clever! It's your lookout, sir, of course, and not mine; but I can't help thinking that to give my friend Mr Wilkins an estate to manage is uncommonly like turning a fox into a poultry-yard to take care of the chickens.'

Such was Jasper Denizil's remonstrance with his father, on hearing the baronet's announcement of his intention to transfer the reins of local government to the willing hands of the City solicitor, *vice* Pounce and Pontifex superseded. Privately, Sir Sykes was of much the same

opinion as his son; but as he was merely seeking to put a good face on what he felt to be really a surrender to a demand imperiously urged, he shook his head, saying: 'You are prejudiced against this person, Jasper, and perhaps not unnaturally so. His manners, I admit, are not prepossessing, and his moral code has probably been shaped in a rough school of ethics; but I consider him to be one of those men whom it is pleasanter to have for a friend than for an enemy.'

Jasper's expressive upper lip wore a curl of disgust. It was to him very disagreeable that Mr Wilkins, who had got the better of him, as he resentfully felt, in many an encounter of wits, should be often at Carbery, and right-hand man to its owner. He resolved on one more attempt to dislodge the intruder.

'I would not, were I you, sir,' said he, 'either trust Wilkins a yard farther than I could see him, or be guided by his advice as to the management of the estate. You yourself heard the fellow say, at luncheon to-day, that he should not know turnips when he saw them unless there were boiled mutton in the middle of them. Wilkins only meant to raise a laugh when he hashed up that old joke against the Cockney sportsmen who ride to hounds, but he was nearer the truth than he was aware of.'

'Ah, well,' returned the baronet blandly, 'I daresay his agricultural knowledge is after all pretty much on a par with that of Messrs Pounce and Pontifex.'

And then Jasper shrugged up his shoulders and was silent, for he perceived that it was hopeless to deprecate a foregone conclusion. For good or for ill, Sir Sykes had made up his mind to convert Mr Wilkins into a grand-vizier over the broad acres that lay within the circuit of his wide-stretching ring-fence.

Enoch Wilkins, gentleman, had on that morning reached Carbery Chase, and was in a fair way of earning for himself any rather than golden opinions from its inmates. Mr Wilkins, as he often and not untruly boasted, knew the world, that is to say he had a minute and almost microscopic acquaintance with one or two sections of the shady side of it. He understood turf-men, as a smart prison-governor understands convicts, and knew the natural history of the fast-living and embarrassed young officer as well as some lecturer on entomology knows the ways of beetle and butterfly. In a lower social grade, he was deeply versed in the arcana of Loan Societies, and could apply the thumbscrew of the County Court in nicely calculated proportions to a struggling debtor. Of what he called swell society Mr Wilkins had but a limited experience. He had shared, as the purveyors of welcome cash often do share, in the costly banquets given at Greenwich or Richmond hotels by wild young gentlemen of blood and fashion. He had even, at the instance of some needy man about town who carried favour with any dispenser of ready-money, received a card which entitled him, now and again, to be crushed and jostled and trodden upon by distinguished company at the maddening 'At Home' of some berouged and bewigged old peeress.

There was, as Mr Wilkins felt with some inward misgivings, a difference between forming part of a mob at Macheath House or at the Baratarian Embassy, and mixing on intimate terms with such

a family as were the Denzils. Yet, as the French idiomatically twist the phrase, he paid it off with audacity, being greedily familiar with Sir Sykes; on terms of brotherly frankness where Jasper was concerned; and for the benefit of the young ladies, assuming the character of the facetious and agreeable rattle, as he conceived incumbent on a regular Londoner and a bachelor to boot, when on a visit in the country.

Blanche and Lacey Denzil scarcely knew whether to let amusement or dislike predominate in their minds as Mr Wilkins rattled on, pouring out miscellaneous anecdotes and jokes that, if worn threadbare in the metropolis, would, he was convinced, retain enough of their original gloss and sparkle to pass muster in the country. That the man was coarse, pushing, and unscrupulous, was evident even to critics so lenient as the baronet's daughters; while Sir Sykes, behind his urbane smile, suffered martyrdom from his new agent's deportment.

There was one member of the family circle at Carbery whom Mr Wilkins eyed with quite an exceptional interest. He rarely addressed himself in conversation to the Indian orphan, Sir Sykes's ward, but he watched her narrowly, and the more he saw of her the harder he found it to adhere to his original hypothesis as regarded the young lady whom Richard Hold, master mariner, had recommended to his good offices.

'If that demure manner and those downcast eyes do not belong to as sly a puss as ever lived, write me down a greenhorn!' was the mental reflection of Enoch Wilkins, of St Nicholas Poultry, in the City of London, gentleman. 'That she sets her cap at the captain, Sir Sykes Denzil's hopeful heir, I take for granted. Her communicative friend, the pirate fellow, implied as much. The Lancer does not seem, however, disposed to come forward in a satisfactory style, and play Philémon to her Baucis.'

It was a fact that since the morning which had witnessed the drive to High Tor and the visit to the pheasantry, the snares of Miss Ruth Willis had been vainly set for the capture of that bird of dubious feather, Jasper Denzil.

Why Jasper, who had so much to gain by the match on which his father's mind was inexplicably bent, should hang back and prove recalcitrant, it was hard to say. His was not an independent soul. He was free from any trammels of a too scrupulous delicacy, and would have fingered any money got through the grimmest channels, without fear of soiling those white useless hands of his, the manliest work of which had hitherto been to grasp a bridle-rein. Yet Jasper had been very remiss of late in his attentions towards Ruth Willis, and apparently indifferent to the bribe of an income and establishment to be earned by marrying her.

'Now look here, Sir Sykes!' said the lawyer after dinner, as he edged his chair nearer to that of his host, refilled his glass, and assumed a tone of waggish confidence—'look here, Sir Sykes! You want brushing up down here at Carbery, you do indeed; ay and a little fresh air let in upon you. In an old estate like this, and under such management as those of Pounce and Proser—beg his pardon; I mean Pontifex; ha, ha, ha!'—pursued Mr Wilkins, having his laugh out, without so much as a sympathetic titter from Jasper or a smile

from Sir Sykes—'in an estate of this kind matters are apt to stagnate, and all sorts of abuses and jobs to grow up, like the green duckweed on the surface of a pool. Your head-gamekeeper now, Sir Sykes, I never saw him, but I'm sure that he's a rogue.'

'Leathers is an old servant,' answered Sir Sykes coldly; 'I have had no reason to think ill of him.'

'I'll go bail that he's a rogue, for all that,' returned the unabashed lawyer, holding up his glass to the light, to admire the ruby claret before he swallowed it. 'The head-keeper of an easy-going, moneyed gent of your standing—excuse me, Sir Sykes—must be a saint, if he's not a sinner. Think of the temptations! Why, the rabbits alone must be a cool two hundred a year to the man; and then the pheasants, and the black-mail from the tenants for keeping the ground-game within reasonable numbers, and the percentage on watchers' wages. I'll get you a contract with a London poulterer, Sir Sykes, that shall stand you in something handsome, provide you with a keeper twice as useful as Leathers, and insure your having a hot corner for your friends at battue-time. I'm a new broom, and sweep clean.'

'You promise well, at any rate!' said Jasper with a languid sneer.

'And did you ever know me not ready to implement when I had once promised?' briskly retorted the solicitor. 'I merely mention the gamekeeper to shew that all's fish that comes to my net, and that I am not above attending to such minor fry as a fellow in velvet with a dog-whistle at his button-hole. We must go on commercial principles, Sir Sykes, if we want to manage an estate so as to make it pay, nowadays. All that feudal nonsense of an affectionate tenantry and a liberal lord of the manor is about as dead as Queen Anne. You should get a new steward as well as a new gamekeeper, Sir Sykes.'

The baronet stirred restlessly in his chair. He did not at all like this. Carbery, and the fair estate that went with it, had never yet been administered on commercial principles, especially when applied by so sweeping a reformer as Mr Wilkins of St Nicholas Poultry. 'Mr Cornish keeps his accounts very correctly,' he said in a hesitating tone. 'Old Lord Harrogate gave him the stewardship, which his father had had before him, and his tenure of it has satisfied me.'

'Because you can afford, or fancy you can, to be robbed right and left,' said the lawyer, gulping down his wine. 'It is your plausible hereditary steward, that has fattened and battenened on the plunder of successive generations, who sucks the very marrow out of the land. Don't tell me! I'll overhaul Mr Cornish's accounts in a way he's little used to. But first you must introduce me to the farmers, Sir Sykes, and give me time to worm out of them what they pay, in kind or money, by way of fines, good-will, premium, and so forth, for the honour of filling your under-rented acres. I'll raise your rent-roll, never fear me, but not with a native chawbacon for prime-minister.'

'So the steward must be flung overboard, it seems, as well as poor old Leathers the keeper,' observed Jasper, half amused, but half annoyed.

'And I've got another peg to fit into the vacant hole,' said the lawyer, again addressing himself to the claret. 'With your permission, Sir Sykes,

to-morrow we'll wire for him to run down from London for your approval. A sharp fellow is Abraham. You won't mind his persuasion? Jew as he is, he's thoroughly at home in a farmhouse, counts every sheaf of wheat in the barn, and every house-lamb in the kitchen on frosty days, and wheedles out of the women what the husbands are too dogged to tell.—This is delicious claret, but no one except myself seems to drink it. Suppose we join the ladies?'

'What has the governor done,' groaned Jasper, as he lit his cigar, 'to be under the thumb of such a man as this?'

WORK IN THE LONDON DOCKS.

In the metropolis there is always to be found a vast amount of 'labour unattached,' recruited from men in nearly every rank of life. To form an idea of the surplusage in the labour market, advertise for a 'light-porter,' and you will have at least two hundred applications before eleven o'clock the next day. If you desire a clerk at a salary of, say, twenty shillings a week, half a thousand eager candidates will apply for the vacancy. While if you have anything of a superior sort to offer, such as the secretaryship of a charitable institution, or hospital, suitable to the talents of retired military officers and others, probably a thousand competitors will offer themselves to your discrimination. Of course many people will be surprised that such numbers should prefer living in semi-idleness, hunting after any opportunity that offers, rather than exert themselves to obtain employment in less crowded localities; but then in London there is the great magnet of the 'lucky chance' constantly before their eyes. If one obtains a situation at a pound a week, there are constantly opportunities of bettering one's self, especially in large firms, who carefully select and promote their men according to capability and merit. Then, again, a man may be starving in a garret, poorly dressed, existing somehow by borrowing a shilling or two occasionally when you meet him in the street; but in a month or two may be in a good position in an insurance company or an actuary's office. But as bread must be obtained somehow until the golden opportunity offers itself, a number of men who have seen better days are compelled by sheer necessity to fly to that paradise of the destitute, the Docks.

The great Dock Companies in London, fully aware of the superabundance of labour always in the market, do not employ permanently, one-third of the men they require, since they are usually able to procure at least twice as many hands as they need at a moment's notice. Indeed so great is the competition for even Dock employment, that unless you are known to one of the foremen, or in some way furnished with an introduction to one of the Company's officials, you stand a very poor chance of obtaining work, save occasionally, when a sudden pressure of business comes on and they are glad to accept any one that offers. Sometimes a huge ship comes in requiring to be discharged in a few days; and everybody who can work may, by offering himself, obtain employment for a brief period; but, the time of pressure over, he will present himself at the Dock-gates day after day in vain. The Company's foremen of course give the preference to their regular hands, and the

stranger who has helped them in their time of need is passed over. So the best thing you can do if you desire employment at the Docks is to obtain a letter of recommendation from some broker or merchant who does business with the Company, and according to the influence he possesses so will your work be regulated. It will require great influence to enable you to be placed on the 'permanent' or 'extra-permanent' staff; and the utmost you can hope for is to obtain employment by the day so long as any ships are at work, with the prospect of losing a few days now and then when things are dull.

The clock has struck a quarter past seven in the morning, and already may be seen clustered round the Dock-gates small groups of men, with hands invariably in their pockets and short pipes in their mouths, discussing the prospect of work for the day, and the only chance they have of obtaining a meal of food and a night's lodging. These are the 'chance' or 'odd-time' men, who if they are not taken on the first thing, loiter about the entrance all day, waiting a 'call' from one of the foremen; sometimes making two, four, or five hours, as the case may be. Of all this class of men, it may be truly said that they are waiters upon Providence, for they are usually the last selected; and as to their garments (their sole earthly possession), very few of them could obtain a shilling for all they wear from head to foot. Indeed so dilapidated are some of their shoes, that it is no uncommon thing for them to be paid off after an hour's work or so, because their feet will not retain a footing upon a slippery floor. It also occurs at times that they come in to work so fatigued that they sink exhausted after a little exertion, though in this case the foremen who employ them are generally kind-hearted enough to advance a few pence to obtain a little food to enable them to hold out the day. As the clock nears the half-hour (7.30 A.M.) the regular 'outsiders' come up. These men are in better condition than the others; but there is a seedy, ragged appearance about most of them, which tells the unmistakable tale that their chief earnings go to the public-house. And now there is a stir. A small wicket in the gate is open, and a foreman comes out, and calling out the names of the men he requires, they pass in. These are engaged by the half-hour, and are liable to be dismissed as soon as their work is completed, let the time be what it may. Usually they remain at work the whole day; but, should any unforeseen occurrence—such as stoppage of a ship's discharge on account of weather, or a break-down in some of the machinery for removing cargo—prevent them labouring, the word is passed to 'wash up,' and they are paid off at once, perhaps an hour or two after they have been engaged.

After this crew come the Company's 'recommended' men, persons who through the influence of some merchant obtain employment. With them also arrive the 'extra-permanent' men; and these two classes always have a preference when any work is going on. They are engaged by the day and paid by the day; and each man on entering receives a numbered ticket about the size of a railway ticket, which will entitle him to receive his wages in rotation at the pay-box in the afternoon. The pay for all alike is fivepence per hour; but the highest class of all, the 'permanent' men, receive

twenty shillings per week all the year round, be the hours long or short, and are always certain of their money whether the Company can find work for them or not. In the months of November, December, January, and February, the work is from nine to four, and the remainder of the year from eight to four, with extra pay for overtime to all alike when any is to be made. Thus it will be seen that with pretty constant employment a fair living is to be made at the Docks; but in addition, many men make something extra in the evenings, either as 'supers' at one of the theatres, chairmen at those convivial meetings known as 'Free-and-Easies,' or in some other capacity. In short, at the Docks, as elsewhere, it is only the idle and disreputable class that starves; for the Company's officials naturally select the best men first, and only employ the 'duffers' when they cannot possibly do without them.

At a few minutes before eight we are all at our posts; men are on board ship commencing to roll out the bales of merchandise from the 'hold;' the ponderous hydraulic 'ram' swings out from the warehouse, and three or four bales are hooked on and hoisted ashore. It is (we will say) a large Australian wool ship; and as soon as the bales are landed, they are pointed upon by a man with stencil-plate and brush, who with nimble fingers marks the name of the ship on each. Then an individual with stentorian lungs (probably a broken-down auctioneer) shouts out to the check clerk at the table the mark on each particular bale, and this is recorded in a book called a 'tally-sheet.' Next, a couple of muscular men attack with axes the iron bands with which the bales are clamped, and sever them, so that the wool expands to nearly double its size; for it is all pressed by hydraulic machinery previous to being stowed in the ship, in order to economise space. The bales thus released are now trotted off by active truckmen to the scales, where they are weighed, marked, and sorted in different piles according to their mark. All this is done in less time than it takes to read about it, amid a storm of shouts, execrations, commands, and other noises in every conceivable variety.

Let us take a walk round the Docks and warehouses and inspect the vast piles of merchandise lying about in every direction. Yonder is a ship discharging brandy, with a vigilant Custom-house officer watching every cask as it comes ashore. In another place they are emptying on the floor hogshead after hogshead of coffee, to be weighed for duty. That sedate-looking man with a needle in his hand sewing up rice-bags has been a school-master, and can write excellent hexameters. A little farther on, a solicitor, unfortunately struck off the rolls, is wheeling a truck; and farther on a once prosperous merchant is assisting to push along a hogshead of sugar. The conclusion one arrives at, after making the round of the Docks, is, that nearly everything we eat and drink is manipulated first by the dirty classes, who shovel our necessities about at their pleasure, and tread over them as if they were so much dirt. See those dingy men with garments tattered and patched, stooping and working on those sloppy floors. They are scraping up the molasses which has filtered out from the sugar-casks, and putting it into tubs. This will be all sent away to the

sugar-boilers', and converted into cheap sugar, and go to localities where it will be bought by housekeepers who study economy in the kitchen. This sort of sugar always has a lumpy clear appearance, with a slight clammy taste in the mouth, and can be detected with a little practice at a glance. It is usually sold alone, but is often mixed with better sugar, in order to make that half-penny difference in the pound so tempting to certain housewives.

We are warned that it is noon by the tinkling of a bell, which resounds all over the Dock; and at the first stroke everything is dropped out of hand immediately, and to the cry of 'Bell ho!' every one rushes out of the warehouses for dinner. A few of the more provident have brought some in their pockets; but the majority go straight to the old man or old woman who is permitted by the Company to supply them with bread, cheese, beer, soup, and pudding, all of an indifferent sort; and if they have any money, buy something to eat; and if they have none, try and borrow a penny or two from somebody else; or cajole the refreshment caterer into giving them credit until four o'clock. Very few of them have knives wherewith to cut their food decently; they gnaw it anyhow; in fact their chief rule seems to be to buy nothing that they are not absolutely compelled to buy, for fear the vendor should cheat them; and if some of them could observe this rule so far as the beer-shop is concerned, they would make their fortunes, many of them possessing talents, as experts in 'tasting,' of no common order.

Their meal finished, some now creep on board ship to smoke, a thing they are not allowed to do in the warehouses; others of a larcenous disposition, prowl about the cook's galley to appropriate anything they can, such as meat, knives, brushes, in short any small portable articles, which they either devour, or else sell at any price to somebody else. At twenty minutes past twelve the bell again summons them to work, and each man crawls slowly back to his post, the majority of cheeks indicating apparently the existence of gum-boil to the uninitiated, but which abnormal appearance is due solely to the companionable 'quid' of tobacco.

By this time a number of vans are in the yard waiting to take away goods, and the foremen are pretty nearly sure to want some extra hands to assist. Consequently they go to the gates, and select as many as they require from the forest of palms held up before them. In this way work goes on until a few minutes before four, when all parties knock off, unless the ship should have to work an hour or two longer. At the pay-box the men arrange themselves in numerical order, and are paid with great celerity by the cashier, the exact amount due to each man being handed to him as he passes the window. At the exit gate are stationed two of the Company's constables, who search any one they have cause to suspect, for in spite of the utmost vigilance and the aid of a large staff of police, pilfering is constantly going on within the Docks, and it requires great watchfulness to prevent the men taking anything out. As it is, things are occasionally smuggled out, though, when an offender is convicted, he usually meets with a severe penalty.

The London and St Katherine's Docks (now

amalgamated under one Company) cover an area of about forty-five acres, and have nearly as much warehouse accommodation as all the other Dock companies put together. The capital embarked in them, inclusive of loans and debentures, may be stated at about eight millions sterling, and the employés of all classes about three thousand daily. The annual imports into these Docks are seldom less than seventy millions, the exports being also considerable. With all this enormous trade and this vast amount of business, things are managed with great, though of course not perfect accuracy; every man knows his place, and there are seldom any mistakes but such as will occur at times from unavoidable hurry and confusion.

PRETTY MRS OGILVIE

ALL the women are jealous of her; there is no doubt about that. The first time she appears in church with crisp mauve muslin floating about her and a dainty mauve erection on her head, which presumably she calls a bonnet, I know at once how it will be. And of course the other sex will range themselves on her side to a man; that is also beyond question. As she rises from her knees and takes her little lavender-gloved hands from her face and looks about her for a moment with a sweet shy glance, she is simply bewitching; and I doubt if any male creature in our rusty little church pays proper attention to the responses for ten minutes afterwards. A new face is a great rarity with us, and such a new face one might not see more than once in a decade, so let us hope we may be forgiven.

As I gaze at the delicate profile before me, the coils of golden hair, the complexion like the inside of a sea-shell, the slender milk-white throat, and the long dark eyelashes, which drop modestly over the glorious gray eyes, shall I own that I steal a glance of disapproval at Mary Anne, my Mary Anne, the partner of my joys and sorrows for twenty years, and the mother of my six children? Mary Anne's figure is somewhat overblown, her hair is tinged with gray, and the complexion of her good-humoured face is slightly rufous. But she has been a good wife to me; and I feel, with a twinge of compunction, that I have no right to be critical, as I think of a shining spot on the top of my own head, and of a little box I received from the dentist only a month ago, carefully secured from observation. But as we emerge from church I draw myself up and try to look my best as we pass the trailing mauve robes. Jack, one of our six, stumbles over the train; which gives me an opportunity of raising my hat and apologising for the brat's awkwardness; and I am rewarded with a sweet smile and an upward glance out of the great gray eyes which is simply intoxicating.

'We must call on Mrs Ogilvie at once,' I observe to Mary Anne as we proceed across the fields on our homeward walk. 'It is my duty as her landlord to find out if she is comfortable. She is a lady-like person,' I continue, diplomatically forbearing to allude to the obvious beauty; 'and I duresny, my dear, you will find her an agreeable neighbour.'

'Ladylike!' cries my wife, with a ring of indignation in her voice. 'I don't call it ladylike to come to a quiet country church dressed as if she

were going to a flower-show. Besides, she is painted. A colour like that can't be natural. But you men are all alike—always taken with a little outside show and glitter.’

‘But my dear,’ I remonstrate, ‘perhaps she did not know how very counterfeited and bucolic our congregation is; and I really do think it will be very unneighbourly if we don't call. It must be very dull for her to know no one.’ I ignore the remark about the paint, but in my heart I give the assertion an emphatic contradiction.

Mrs Ogilvie has rented a small cottage which I own in the west-country village in which I am the principal doctor. She is the wife of a naval officer who is away in the Flying Squadron, and has settled in our sleepy little hamlet to live quietly during his absence. All her references have been quite unexceptionable, and indeed she is slightly known to our Squire, as is also her absent husband. ‘A splendid fellow he is,’ Mr Dillon tells me, ‘stands six feet in his stockings, and is as handsome as Apollo; indeed I don't believe that for good looks you could find such another couple in England.’

The following day Mary Anne, with but little persuasion, agrees to accompany me to the cottage to call on Mrs Ogilvie. The door is opened by a neat maid-servant. She is at home; and we are ushered into the drawing-room, which we almost fail to recognise, so changed is it. Bright fresh hangings are in the windows, a handsome piano stands open, books and periodicals lie on the tables in profusion, and flowers are everywhere. ‘Evidently a woman of refinement and cultivated tastes,’ I think to myself; ‘the beauty is more than skin deep.’

Presently Mrs Ogilvie comes in, looking if possible even lovelier than she did the day before. She is in a simple white dress, with here and there a knot of blue ribbon about it; and she has a bit of blue also in her golden hair. Her manner is as charming as her looks, and as she thanks my wife with pleasant cordial words for being the first of her neighbours to take compassion on her loneliness, I can see that my Mary Anne, whose heart is as large as her figure, basely deserts the female faction and goes over to the enemy. Mrs Ogilvie is very young, still quite a girl, though she has been married three years she tells us.

‘It is dreadful that Frank should have to go away,’ she says, and the tears well up in her large gray eyes; ‘that is the worst of the service. But I suppose no woman ought to interfere with her husband's career. I am going to live here as quietly as possible until he returns. See; here is his photograph,’ she continues, lifting a case from the table and handing it to Mary Anne. ‘Is he not handsome?’

He is most undeniably so, if the likeness speaks truth, and we both say so; Mary Anne, with the privilege of her sex and age, adding a word as to the beauty of the pair.

‘O yes,’ replies Mrs Ogilvie without the smallest embarrassment: ‘we are always called the “handsome couple.”’

I suppose something of my astonishment expresses itself in my countenance, for she smiles, and says: ‘I am afraid you think me very vain; but I cannot help knowing that I am good-looking, any more than I can help being aware that my

eyes are gray, not black, and that my hair is golden. It is a gift from God, like any talent; a valuable one too, I think it; and I own that I am proud of it, for my dear Frank's sake, who admires it so much.’

Yes, this is Mrs Ogilvie's peculiarity, as we afterwards discover—an intense and quite open admiration of her own beauty. And indeed there is something so simple and naïve about it, that we do not find it displeasing when we get accustomed to it. She always speaks of herself as if she were a third person, and honestly appreciates her lovely face, as if it were some rare picture, as indeed it is, of Dame Nature's own painting. She is equally ready to admit the good looks of other women, and has not a trace of jealousy in her composition. But often you will hear her say, in describing some one else: ‘She has a lovely complexion—something in the style of mine, but not so clear.’ Or, ‘She has a beautiful head of hair, but not so sunny as mine;’ &c. &c. At first, every one is astonished at this idiosyncrasy of hers, but in a little while we all come to laugh at it; there is something original and amusing about it; and in all other ways she is so charming.

My wife, with whom she speedily becomes intimate, tells me that she is sure she values her beauty more for her husband's sake than her own. ‘She evidently adores him,’ says Mary Anne; ‘and he seems to think so much of her sweet looks. She says he fell in love with her at first sight, before he ever spoke to her.’

But Mrs Ogilvie has many more attractions than are to be found in her face. She is a highly educated woman, a first-rate musician and a pleasant and intelligent companion; and more than all, she has a sweet loving disposition, and a true heart at the core of all her little vanities. She is very good to the poor in our village, and often when I am on my rounds, I meet her coming out of some cottage with an empty basket in her hand, which was full when she entered it.

In a quiet little neighbourhood like ours, such a woman cannot fail to be an acquisition, and every one hastens to call on her, and many are the dinners and croquet parties which are inaugurated in her honour. To the former she will not go; she does not wish to go out in the evening during her husband's absence—much to my wife's satisfaction, who approves of women being ‘keepers at home’—and it is only seldom that she can be induced to grace one of the croquet parties with her presence.

But when she does, she eclipses every one else. She always dresses in the most exquisite taste, as if anxious that the setting should be worthy of the jewel—the beauty which she prizes so highly. She is always sweet and gracious, and vanquishes the men by her loveliness, the women in spite of it. But she is in no sense of the word a coquette; and the only admirer she favours is our Jack, aged fourteen, who is head-over-ears in love with her, and is ready at any moment to forego cricket for the honour of escorting Mrs Ogilvie through the village, and the privilege of carrying her basket. So the quiet weeks and months glide by, linking us daily more closely together.

She has been settled at the cottage rather more than two years and is beginning to count the weeks to her husband's return. We do not number them quite so eagerly, for when he comes he will take

her away from us, and we shall miss her sorely. It is summer again, a hot damp summer; it has been a very sickly season, and my hands are full.

'I shall have to get a partner, my dear,' I say to my wife as I prepare to go out. 'If this goes on I shall have more to do than I can manage. There is a nasty fever about which I don't like the look of; and if we don't have a change for the better in this muggy weather, there is no saying what it may turn to.'

'I am glad all the boys are at school,' observes Mary Anne, 'and I think I will let the girls accept their aunt's invitation and go to her for a month.'

'It would be a very good plan, and I should be glad if you would go too. A little change would do you good.'

'And pray who is to look after you?' asks my wife reproachfully. 'Who is to see that you take your meals properly, and don't rush off to see your patients, leaving your dinner untasted on the table?'

Mentally I confess that I should probably be poorly off without my Mary Anne; but it is a bad plan to encourage vanity in one's wife, so I say: 'Oh, I should do very well by myself; and with a parting nod betake myself to my daily duty.'

In the village I meet Mrs Ogilvie, basket in hand. She doesn't look well, and I say so.

'You have no business out in the heat of the day,' I tell her. 'You are not a Hercules, and you will only be knocking yourself up. What will your husband say, if he does not find you looking your best when he comes back?'

A shade passes over her face. 'Ah! he would not be pleased,' she says rather gravely; 'he always likes to see me look my very best and prettiest.'

'Well then, as your doctor, I must forbid your doing any more cottage-visiting just at present. You are not looking strong, and going into those close houses is not good for you. I will come and see you on my way back.'

Which I do. I find there is nothing the matter with her; she is only a little languid. Perhaps the weather has affected her; perhaps she is wearying for her husband; and I prescribe a tonic, which I think will soon set her right. I do not remain long with her, for I have an unspoken anxiety, and I am in a hurry to get home.

'You had better send the children away to-morrow morning, Mary Anne,' I say as soon as I get in. 'Mrs Black is very ill, and I am afraid—I cannot quite tell yet, but I am afraid—she is going to have small-pox. Of course I shall have her removed at once, if I am right; but it may prove not to be an isolated case, and it will be as well to get the children out of the way. I shall try and persuade every one in the village to be vaccinated to-morrow.'

'You will be clever if you manage that,' says my wife. 'I am afraid some of the people are very prejudiced against it. You know when the children and I were revaccinated three years ago, you could not persuade any of the villagers to be done at the same time.'

On the following day we despatch the children early to their aunt's, under the care of an old servant; and as soon as I have seen them off, I go down to Mrs Black's. To my consternation I find Mrs Ogilvie just leaving the house.

'I have been disobedient, you see,' she says

gaily; 'but I promised to bring Mrs Black something early this morning; and she seemed so ill yesterday that I did not like to disappoint her. But I am not going to transgress orders again—for Frank's sake,' she adds softly.

I give an internal groan. Heaven grant she may not have transgressed them once too often! And I hasten into the cottage, to find my worst fears confirmed. Mrs Black has small-pox quite unmistakably.

For some hours I am occupied in making arrangements for her removal to the infirmary, and in vaccinating such of my poorer patients as I can frighten or coerce into allowing me to do so; and it is afternoon before I am able to go and look after Mrs Ogilvie.

She seems rather astonished when I inform her what my errand is—that I want to vaccinate her (for of course I do not wish to frighten her by telling her about Mrs Black); but she submits readily enough when I say that I have heard of a case of small-pox in a neighbouring village (which I have), and think it would be a wise precautionary measure.

'It is very good of you,' she says in her pretty gracious way as she bares her white arm. 'I have never been vaccinated since I was a baby, so I suppose it will be desirable.'

Desirable? I should think so indeed! And I send up a prayer as I perform the operation that I may not be too late.

I am so busy for the next few days that I am unable to go down to the cottage. One or two more cases of small-pox appear in the village, and I am anxious and hard-worked; but Mary Anne tells me that Mrs Ogilvie has heard of Mrs Black's removal and is dreadfully nervous about herself. 'I hope she will not frighten herself into it,' adds my wife.

'If she hadn't contracted it before I vaccinated her, I think she is pretty safe,' I reply; 'but there is just the chance that she may have had the poison in her previously.'

Almost as I speak a message comes from Mrs Ogilvie, who 'wishes to see me professionally.' My heart sinks as I seize my hat and follow the messenger; and with too good reason. I find her suffering from the first symptoms of small-pox; and in twenty-four hours it has declared itself unequivocally and threatens to be a bad case. I try to keep the nature of her illness from her, but in vain. She questions me closely, and when she discovers the truth, gives way to a burst of despair which is painful to witness. 'I shall be marked; I shall be hideous!' she exclaims, sobbing bitterly. 'Poor Frank, how he will hate me!'

In vain I try to comfort her, to convince her that in not one out of a hundred cases does the disease leave dreadful traces behind it; she refuses to be consoled. And soon she is too ill to be reasoned with, or indeed to know much of her own state. She is an orphan, and has no near relatives for whom we can send, so Mary Anne installs herself in the sick-room as head-nurse; and as I see her bending lovingly over the poor disfigured face, and ministering with tender hands to the ceaseless wants of the invalid, my wife is in my eyes beautiful exceedingly; so does the shadow of a good deed cast a glory around the most homely countenance.

For some time Mrs Ogilvie's life is in great

danger; but her youth and good constitution prevail against the grim destroyer, and at length I am able to pronounce all peril past.

But alas, alas! all my hopes, all my care, all my poor skill have been in vain; and the beauty which we have all admired so much, and which has been so precious to our poor patient, is a thing of the past. She is marked—slightly it is true; but the pure complexion is thick and muddy, the once bright eyes are heavy and dull, and the golden hair is thin and lustreless. We keep it from her as long as we can, but she soon discovers it in our sorrowful looks; and her horror, her agony, almost threaten to unseat her reason. My wife is with her night and day, watching her like a mother, using every argument she can think of to console her, and above all, counselling with gentle words submission to the will of God. But her misery, after the first shock, is not so much for herself as for the possible effect the loss of her beauty may have on her husband, who is now daily expected. His ship has been at sea, so we have been unable to write to him; and only on his arrival in Plymouth Sound will he hear of his poor young wife's illness and disfigurement. Before her sickness she had been counting the hours; now she sees every day go past with a shudder, feeling that she is brought twenty-four hours nearer to the dread trial. At length his vessel arrives, and I receive a telegram telling me when we may expect him, and begging me to break the news gently to his wife. She receives it with a flood of bitter tears and sobs, crying out that he will hate and loathe her, and that she is about to lose all the happiness of her life. My wife weeps with her; and I am conscious of a choking sensation in my throat as we take leave of her half an hour before Mr Ogilvie is expected, and pray God to bless and sustain her.

We are sitting in rather melancholy mood after dinner, talking of the poor young husband and wife, when Mr Ogilvie is announced, and I hasten to the door to meet him.

'She will not see me!' he says impetuously, coming in without any formal greeting. 'She has shut herself into her room, and calls to me with hysterical tears that she is too dreadful to look upon, that I shall cease to love her as soon as I behold her, and that she cannot face it.' And the strong man falls into a chair with a sob.

'It is not so bad as that,' I begin.

'I don't care how bad it is,' he cries; 'she need not doubt my love. My poor darling will always be the same to me whether she has lost her beauty or not.'

Whereupon I extend my hand to him and shake his heartily; and I know my wife has great difficulty in restraining herself from enveloping him in her motherly arms and embracing him.

'We must resort to stratagem,' I say. 'I will go down to the cottage at once, and you follow me in ten minutes with my wife. I will try and coax Mrs Ogilvie to come out and speak to me, and you must steal upon her unawares.'

Mrs Ogilvie at first refuses to see or speak to me; but I go up to her door and am mean enough to remind her of my wife's devotion to her and entreat her, for her sake, to come down to me.

'Where is Frank?' she asks.

'I left him at home with Mary Anne,' I reply, feeling that I am worthy of being a diplomatist at

the court of St Petersburg, as she opens the door and descends the stairs. I take her out into the garden and begin to reprove her for her conduct, with assumed anger. She listens with eyes blinded by tears. I, on the look-out for it, hear the latch of the garden gate click; but she, absorbed in her sorrow, does not notice it. I look up and see Frank Ogilvie's eyes fixed hungrily on his wife. Her changed appearance must be an awful shock to him; but he bears it bravely; and in a moment he has sprung forward, clasped her in his arms, and the poor scarred face is hidden on his true and loving heart!

Then Mary Anne and I turn silently away, and leave him to teach her that there are things more valuable, of far higher worth than any mere beauty of face or form.

After all, we do not lose her, for Mr Ogilvie coming into some money, leaves the navy and purchases a small estate in our neighbourhood, on which they still reside. Mrs Ogilvie is no longer young, and has a family of lads and lasses around her, who inherit much of their mother's loveliness. But one of the first things she teaches them is not to set a fictitious value on it; 'for,' she says, 'I thought too much of mine, and God took it from me.' No one ever hears her regret the loss of her beauty; 'for, through that trial,' she tells my wife, 'I learned to know the true value of my Frank's heart.'

She simply worships her husband, and is in all respects a happy woman. Indeed, seeing the sweet smiles which adorn her face and the loving light which dwells in her eyes, I am sometimes tempted to call her as of yore—Pretty Mrs Ogilvie.

BURNABY'S RIDE IN TURKEY.

In his volume of travels in Turkey, Captain Burnaby has given such a large variety of amusing particulars, that it is eminently worthy of perusal. The following are a few rough notes:

Radford, the captain's English servant, was one of the veritable descendants of Uncle Toby's Corporal Trim; men—for there are a large family of them—to whom the word duty means obeying the word of command, no matter what form it may happen to take, be it to cook a dinner or storm a trench. At Constantinople another servant was required and engaged—one Osman, a Mohammedan, a very smart fellow, in every sense of the word. Picturesque in dress, tall and fine-looking into the bargain, and fully alive to the worth of the Effendi's gold, to which he helped himself unsparingly, without hurt to his conscience or hindrance to his prayers. The devotion of this worthy proving a fruitful source of misery to the captain, he came to the conclusion that religious servants are a mistake, especially in the East.

At Constantinople there was some little delay occasioned by having horses to buy and friends to see, and then there were the cafés, which are always amusing more or less; for the proprietors find that good voices and pretty girls are sure attractions, whether for Chaour or Turk. But the poor girls have a hard time of it. By birth they are chiefly Hungarian and Italian. They act as waitresses mostly, and are compelled by the Turks who frequent the cafés to sweeten, by tasting, all that they order. The violence thus

done to their digestive organs may be imagined. One Italian girl bemoaned her lot, saying: 'It is such a mixture. I have a pain sometimes (pointing to the bodice of her dress). I wish to cry; but I have to run about and smile, wait upon visitors and drink with them. It is a dreadful life! Oh, if I could only return to Florence!'

Captain Burnaby found the Turkish women's faces 'sadly wanting in expression'; at least those he had an opportunity of seeing, for the women all go veiled. Still their veils are of very thin muslin, and man's curiosity is penetrating. But this noticeable lack of expression is not to be wondered at, when we hear that they are wholly uncultivated in mind—only one in a thousand among them can read or write. They amuse themselves in gossip and eating.

The Ride was not at all times agreeable. It was not pleasant, for instance, having to cross wooden bridges without parapets, and to see the river below through holes in the wooden planks beneath the horse's feet; or to wade up to the horse's girths through lanes of water. But such is the fortune of travelling in the unknown.

At the village of Nahilan the caimacan or governor was hospitable, and soon the whole population was in attendance to see and talk with the traveller. He was given the seat of honour on a rug near the fire. The caimacan in a fur-lined dressing-gown came next, the rest of the party in order not according to rank, but according to their possessions—the man who owned one limbed cows being seated next the governor. Conversation at first did not get on any better there than at home. But some one made a plunge, and the state of the roads was discussed. This opened the way to politics and the prospect of English help, about which the Turks were eager and anxious to learn. The war was the one topic of interest among them, as well it might be. The scenery in the neighbourhood was lovely, and Captain Burnaby wished that he had been born a painter, to have caught the impression of the beauty around him, and have fixed it for ever on canvas. He has painted at least one little sketch successfully in words: 'A succession of hills, each one loftier than its fellow, broke upon us as we climbed the steep (leading towards Angora). They were of all forms, shades, and colours, ash grey, blue, vermillion, robed in imperial purple, and dotted with patches of vegetation. Our road wound amidst these chameleon-like heights, whose silvery rivulets streamed down the sides of the many-coloured hills.'

But we must leave this pretty scene to describe the night's lodging at the next halt, which gives us an insight into Turkish beds and bedrooms. No bedsteads are used. 'One or two mattresses are laid on the floor; the *yorgan*, a silk quilt lined with linen and stuffed with feathers, taking the place of sheets and blankets. These yorgans are heirlooms in a Turkish family, and are handed down from father to son. It is a mark of high respect when a host gives you his wedding yorgan to sleep under. Captain Burnaby found the honour a trying one, as many generations of fleas shared it with him. Osman grew eloquent on the subject of yorgans. He had one so beautiful that neither his wife nor himself liked to use it.

Hearing that he was married, Captain Burnaby

questioned him about his wife. Did he love her? Was she pretty? To which Osman replied: 'She is a good cook. She makes soup. Effendi, I could not afford to marry a good-looking girl. There was one in our village—such a pretty one, with eyes like a hare and plump as a turkey—but she could not cook, and her father wanted too much for her. For my present wife I gave only ten liras (or Turkish pounds); but she did not weigh more than one hundred pounds. She was very cheap. Her eyes are not quite straight, but she can cook. Looks don't last; but cooking is an art that the Prophet himself did not despise.'

At every place a cordial reception awaited the traveller. The Turks are not ungrateful; and English help during the Crimean War is still remembered. At Angora, a town of importance, there was an English vice-consul, a married man, living in a house furnished with every English comfort. He is the only Englishman, or rather Scotchman, in the place. A Turkish gentleman gave a dinner-party in honour of the traveller. These Turkish dinner-parties are compared to Turkish music, and declared to consist of a series of surprises. 'In music the leader of an orchestra goes from *candante* to a *moing* pace without any crescendo whatever. The cook in the same manner gives first a dish as sweet as honey, and then astonishes our stomach with a sauce as acid as vinegar. Now we are eating fish, another instant blane-mange. And so on throughout the feast were the startling contrasts continued. Servants were abundant and pressing. Each guest ate with his fingers, helping himself according to his rank or social status? When dinner was over the host rose, not forgetting to say his grace: 'Praise be to God.' A servant then poured water over the hands of each, according to his rank, for precedence is duly observed in the veriest trifle; and then they all adjourned to another room to smoke and drink coffee.

Nothing can exceed the hospitality and generosity of the Turk. Admire what belongs to him, and he begs you to accept it, be it a book, a horse, or a servant. Talking of servants, it was amusing to hear Osman railing at the man in charge of the pack-horse for allowing the horse that carried the valuables, in the form of groceries and cartridges, to lie down in a river, thus injuring the contents of his pack. The Eastern method of abuse is to attack a man's female relatives—a point on which all Easterns are most sensitive—in language the reverse of choice.

In Anatolia and in most parts of Asia Minor, every man is his own architect and builder, on the following simple principles. When old enough to marry, a man chooses a bit of oblong ground, on the side of a hill if he can, and digs out the earth to the depth of several feet. 'Hewing down some trees, he cuts six posts, each about ten feet high, and drives them three feet into the ground, three posts being on one side of the oblong, three on the other. Cross-beams are fastened to the top of these uprights, and branches of trees, plastered with clay, cover all.' The doorway is of rude construction. In the interior, a wooden railing divides the room into two, one-half of which is occupied by the animals, the other by the family. A hole in the ceiling is the only mode of ventilation, and in cold weather this is stopped up. The 'family' often consists of

twelve in number, and at night they lie huddled on the floor, which in poorer houses is covered with coarse rugs of camels' hair, and Persian rugs among the wealthier. The close proximity to livestock invites a third and irrepressible population of fleas in most of these houses. The misery of a night spent with legions of these insects must be felt to be thoroughly understood and appreciated. They formed the chief discomfort of the travellers, whose English skins were not case-hardened to the assaults of the lively banqueteers. When sickness overtook them (as it did when they had advanced far on their journey) and sleep became imperative, the misery of our travellers grew serious. To be ravaged by fever as well as by fleas would at once try the strongest. At last in one village a hint was given that if the Effendi's skin were attacked, no bucksheesh would follow. Instantly the host had a remedy at hand. He had a cart in his yard; and the Effendi at last had the comfort of a few hours of undisturbed slumber.

At various places the Armenian churches were visited. It is the custom among the Armenians, as among the Jews, to separate the women from the men during divine service. The Armenians take the further precaution of hiding the women behind a screened lattice-work. Great pity was expressed for our English clergymen when it was found they used no such precaution in their churches, and it was remarked: 'They must find it difficult to keep the attention of their flock, if the ladies are as pretty as they are said to be.' In the Armenian churches, however, the precaution is used to keep the women devotional; but such is the power of attraction, that in many places Captain Burnaby noticed that the lattice had been broken away! The interior of an Armenian church resembles a mosque, and is carpeted with thick Persian rugs. As the Armenian Christians worship pictures, the walls are hung with several in gaudy frames. The service is ritualistic in the extreme, and politic to temporal no less than spiritual rulers; for on the occasion of Captain Burnaby's attendance, the service opened with two songs sung by the choir—one in honour of the Queen of England, out of compliment to the visitor present; the other for the Sultan. Some of their traditions are curious. One is, that a prince of theirs, a leper, living at the same time as Christ, heard of his miracles, and wrote a letter to the Saviour, inviting him to come and take up his abode in Armenia and cure him of his disease. The Lord is supposed to have replied: 'After I have gone, I will send one of my disciples to cure thy malady and give life to thee and thine.' With the letter, Christ is supposed to have sent at the same time a handkerchief which had received the image of his face by being pressed to it; and it is this tradition which they adduce to justify their adoration of pictures.

The Turk's religion is a compound of faith and fatalism, sprinkled occasionally with due precaution. Here is an instance of their fatalism. When Captain Burnaby was at Kars, the streets were in such a filthy condition, owing to the sewage of the town being thrown in front of the buildings, that the hospitals were full of typhoid, and cholera was anticipated; and yet neither soldiers nor inhabitants would stir a finger to remove the source of their miseries out of the streets; the soldiers declaring that they were not scavengers,

and the inhabitants making some other excuse. When warned of the consequences, each took refuge in kismet or fate. Allah was great and able to perform miracles. If Allah saw fit, there would be no cholera—although their streets were reeking with the seeds of disease.

In most of the towns, excitement prevailed in organising battalions for the seat of war. The Turks are essentially a warlike nation, and fight for their country without a murmur, in the face of such disadvantages as bad food and long arrears of pay.

We have not before spoken of a new travelling companion who took Osman's place—one Mohammed by name, who was as faithful as the Prophet himself. Osman turned out a very bad bargain. His fidelity to the Effendi's purse became at last greater even than his love of prayer; and his keen eye after an exorbitant percentage was worthy of a London usurer. Remonstrance was in vain. At last he was dismissed, having been caught thieving, and Mohammed reigned in his stead, to the comfort of all parties. He was a soldier and a mountaineer, brave and hardy on land, but a coward at sea. He loved his lord the Effendi, and dearly loved his 'brother' Radford's cooking. His 'brother's' opinion of him at parting was characteristic: 'That Mohammed was not such a bad chap after all, sir. These Turks have stomachs, and like filling them they do; but they have something in their hearts as well.' And so Mohammed shewed—for in illness he was a kind nurse, and faithful to his 'lord's' interests throughout. On one occasion, Mohammed complained of rheumatism, and Radford applied a mustard paper. What a sensation it created among the Kurd villagers—some of whom were spectators of course—when they heard that the wet paper had produced the fire under which Mohammed lay writhing and groaning. It was a miracle; and forthwith the Effendi was hailed everywhere as a *hakim* or doctor, and his fame spread from place to place on the road. A Persian asked, and even admitted him into his harem, to prescribe for his pretty wife, to whom he gave small doses of quinine. Another time a Kurd asked him to cure his toothache; but mustard papers were powerless here; so Radford was called in consultation, and said it ought to come out. But there were no instruments at hand, and the operation had to be declined. 'Give me something for my stomach then,' asked the Kurd. Three pills were then handed to him, which he chewed deliberately, declaring, when he had finished them, his tooth was better!

At one place, after passing over a narrow wooden bridge that spanned the Euphrates—only forty yards wide at this point—the travellers crossed the Hasta Dagh (mountain); presently they came to a glacier, the frozen surface of which extended a hundred yards, the decline being steeper than the roof of an average English house. 'Should it be taken?' was the question asked with much consternation, and decided in the affirmative. The guide rode his horse to the glacier. The poor animal trembled when it reached the brink; but a reminder from Mohammed's whip hastened the poor brute's decision, and he stretched his forelegs over the declivity, almost touching the slippery surface with his girth. Another crack from Mohammed, and horse and guide were

whirling down the glacier, and only pulled up at last by finding themselves buried in a snow-drift six feet deep. When his turn came, Captain Burnaby describes the sensation as if he were 'waltzing madly down the slippery surface.' To witness the descent of the others was something fearful; though not so dangerous as it appeared. When Radford emerged from his snowy burial, he exclaimed: 'I never thought as how a horse could skate before. It was more than sliding, that it was; a cutting a figure of eight all down the roof of a house.'

Our travellers at last reached Batoum, where they parted from Mohammed, and where we must part from them, not without sincere regret. After this, they took ship across the Black Sea to Constantinople, and all adventures were over. We shall not quickly forget the two thousand miles of ground so graphically described, and over a portion of which we have travelled with them in the saddle. Nor will the reader of Captain Burnaby's volume of travels throughout the land of the Osmanli, easily forget the scenes and incidents and people so graphically depicted. We omit with regret many good stories we should like to have told; but space is inexorable. To those who are inclined to echo this regret, we can only say: 'Do as we have done, and take the ride with Burnaby for yourselves.'

WEDDING EXTRAVAGANCES.

THE following sensible observations on the wastefulness which often takes place on marriage occasions, are from the pen of Camilla Cressland—our old and esteemed contributor originally known as Camilla Toulmin. They appear in *Social Notes*, a weekly periodical not unlike our own, edited by Mr S. C. Hall, and which has our best wishes for its success.

'How many people there are who in fine clothes and with smiling faces "assist" at a modern wedding, yet in their heart of hearts think the profuse outlay and the general festive arrangements usual on the occasion a piece of tiresome folly! Few, however, like to make a dead set against time-honoured customs, unless strong personal feelings or personal interests are concerned.'

'Marriage may certainly lay claim to being the most important event in life, and as such there must ever be solemnity associated with it. In fact our Prayer-book speaks of the solemnisation of matrimony. Of course it is right that there should be a certain publicity attached to every marriage ceremony, and probably in this fact originated the custom of inviting friends to be present on the occasion, till by degrees wedding-parties have become more and more crowded, and now it is a common thing for a vast assembly to congregated at them. Of course where there is great wealth, and people love this sort of display, and bride and bridegroom have nerve for it, and are, moreover, happy in possessing "troops of friends," there is no reason why money should not circulate—the confectioner revel in *chefs-d'œuvre*, the florist realise a week's ordinary income in bouquets, and the milliner make her mint of money by rich toilets. But a vice of the English middle class is to ape the rank above it; and I confess it has often to me seemed pitiable to know at what a cost of after self-denial a showy wedding has taken place.

'It is desirable that when two young people, suitable in age, character, station, are warmly attached, they should be married as soon as prudence permits. Let us take, for instance, the case of an accomplished but portionless young lady, the eldest of several daughters, who has been accustomed to utilise her talents in the home circle. She has been engaged, say four years, to a gentleman in a government office with a slowly rising salary. He is about thirty, she five or six and twenty. He has saved enough money to furnish a pretty little suburban dwelling, and she will be provided by her father with a modest *trousseau*, and they think it now high time to "settle." Their income, even including a fatherly allowance for pin-money, will be considerably less than five hundred pounds per annum, and they, being good arithmeticians, know they must live quietly, visit and entertain only in a homely, friendly manner, and neither go to nor give formal parties. Of what use is the costly white silk bridal dress, which in all human probability will never in its original state be worn again? It will, of course, be laid up carefully, and looked at occasionally with tender sentimental interest; but by-and-by, in a year or two, it will seem old-fashioned, and most probably be picked to pieces and dyed some serviceable colour. Then there were probably at least four bride's-maids, each to be presented with a jewelled *souvenir* for the not too affluent bridegroom, and the costly wedding-breakfast to be provided by the father. One mischief of the thing being that the whole arrangement becomes a precedent, so that the next sister who marries would seem slighted if she were to have a less stylish wedding.'

'Perhaps the costly entertainment—which is often a great trial to the feelings of the parties most chiefly concerned—can only be given by dipping into a very slender capital, or by relinquishing the autumn seaside holiday. The worst of the matter is that the class a little below the one I have attempted to describe, imitates the bad example in its own way and to its own detriment.'

Mrs Cressland, in conclusion, mentions a case in which persons of respectable standing consulted economy and common sense in their marriage arrangements. 'One arrangement having been quickly made, the young lady one morning, dressed in ordinary attire, escorted by her father to "give her away," and accompanied by a younger sister to serve as bride's-maid, walked to the parish church, where the expectant bridegroom was ready to receive them. There the ceremony was performed, the little party returning to partake of the family luncheon before the wedded pair started on their tour. Was not this an example worthy under many circumstances to be followed?'

CANINE CUNNING.

The following is from a correspondent: 'A near neighbour of mine has a large mongrel dog, a terrible nuisance to all passing the house, which unfortunately stands near the highway. The brute has the nasty habit of rushing out and attacking every passing vehicle. Complaints were loud and numerous; and at length the owner hit upon a plan which he thought would effectually

cure his dog. He attached a small log of wood or a "clog" by a chain to his collar. This answered admirably; for no sooner did the dog start in pursuit of anything than the clog not only checked his speed but generally rolled him over into the bargain. Now this would not do. Doggie was evidently puzzled, and reflected upon the position; and if he did not possess reasoning powers, he certainly shewed something very like them, for he quickly overcame the difficulty, and to the surprise of all, was soon at his old work, nearly as bad as ever. And this is how he managed. No longer did he attempt to drag the clog on the ground and allow it to check and upset him, but before starting he caught it up in his mouth, ran before the passing horse, dropped it, and commenced the attack; and when distanced, would again seize the clog in his mouth, and resume his position ahead, and thus became as great a pest as ever. Even on his ordinary travels about he is now seen carrying his clog in his mouth, instead of letting it drag on the ground between his legs.

LOST DOGS.

Few facts will better illustrate the vast scale on which almost everything presents itself in the English metropolis, even so humble a subject as that of poor dogs that have temporarily lost their masters, than one mentioned in the Annual Report of the Chief Commissioner of Police. He informs us that nearly nineteen thousand (more than 18,800) stray dogs were taken charge of by the police in the metropolis during the year 1876! A little romance might be mixed up with the story of most of these homeless wanderers, if we could but know it: how Carlo or Boxer was distressed at losing his protector. The animals were either taken for a while to the Dogs' Home at Battersea, or were otherwise provided for.

IN MEMORIAM.

(M. A. W.—PORTRESS, *ÆTAT* 25.)

O MOUNT heart! so gentle, kind;
Thy life, like a brief summer wind,
Hath passed away,
And left me here on earth to mourn
Thine early flight to that sweet bourne
Where angels stay.

There may my soul from slumber 'wake
When heaven and earth their concord break,
And Time is o'er;
When Christ, in his enthroned array,
Proclaims advent his Advent Day
From shore to shore!

There may we meet at last and find
(Mind, heart, and soul for aye entwined)
Eternal rest;
There tread together Eden's bowers—
The land of life and light and flowers—
With souls as blest.

Brief was thy sojourn here, sweet girl;
And life, with all its glittering whirl,
Soon passed thee by;
Leaving the flower to droop unseen,
The world rolled on, not heeding o'en
Thy dying cry.

In that dark hour, thy fleeting soul,
Regardless of Death's stern control,
Broke forth in song;
And as the falt'ring numbers came,
By angels fair thy hallowed fame
Was borne along.

O well-beloved! enscamed in light,
If thou canst gaze upon my night
Of lonely grief:
Behold me now, and mark the tears
That still must flow through future years
Without relief.

Yet the dread tomb which steals away
From brightest gem its purest ray—
The Life sublime!
Must know we can its power defy,
For thou art safe beyond the sky,
And for all time.

Yea; thou art safe with that great God
Who rules Creation with a rod
Of love and light;
The Being of a glorious mien,
Whose majesty is Grand, Serene,
And Infinite!

Oh, better far thou shouldst be there,
Benighted from this world's doubt and care—
A gloomy train;
Full-veiled in peerless robes of light,
Enthroned where comes no storm, nor night,
Nor grief, nor pain.

And could I gaze above and see
The glow of immortality
That veils thy soul,
And feel thy holy presence near,
To guard me from ungodly fear,
And its control:

Then should I bless the hidden bow
That laid my darling's bosom low
Within the grave;
And own that Love's immortal Hand
Did guide the swift unerring brand
Which struck to save.

J. A. E.

The Conductors of CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL beg to direct the attention of CONTRIBUTORS to the following notice:

1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

2d. To insure the return of papers that may prove ineligible, postage-stamps should in every case accompany them.

3d. MANUSCRIPTS should bear the author's full Christian name, surname, and address, legibly written.

4th. MS. should be written on one side of the leaf only.

5th. Poetical offerings should be accompanied by an envelope, stamped and directed.

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WANDERINGS ROUND ST VALERY.

SHOULD there be any one who wishes to spend a few weeks in a quiet French watering-place not far from the English coast, let him try St Valery. Here he will not find the fashion and gaiety of Trouville, requiring a dozen new costumes for his wife in as many days, nor the picturesque scenery of Biarritz and the Pyrenees. Yet the flat plains of Picardy have their charms, and there is much to interest the archaeologist. This is the classic ground of the troubadours. There are great memories of heroic deeds in the middle ages, and some of the finest monuments of religious zeal. Rivers flow quietly through narrow valleys, planted with willows and poplars, often enlarging into small lakes, where the water-lily spreads its broad leaves and queenly flowers.

Wandering on the downs near the sea, the scenery is sad, but offers a grand and severe beauty of its own. Nothing is there to recall the presence of man; it is a desert, with the eternal murmur of the ocean and the ever-changing aspects of the season. Animals and birds abound in these solitudes; rabbits swarm in their burrows to such a degree that fourteen hundred have been taken from one spot at the same time. The fishing-hawk comes to seek its food in the finny tribes that rise to the surface of the water; a species of wild-fowl intrudes into the rabbit's burrow and there builds her nest; the sea-gull deposits her eggs on the bare rock; the curlew mingles her plaintive cry with the harsher note of the heron. In the cold days of winter the swan, the eider-duck, the wild-geese, driven from the northern seas by the ice, take refuge on the sands left bare at low-water. Sometimes, during the prevalence of east wind, rare foreign birds are driven to the shores; and in the marshes, lapwings, snipes, and water-fowl abound. Capital ground this, for the ornithologist and wild-fowler.

St Valery itself, situated on the river Somme and occupying an important military position, suffered most cruelly in the wars of the middle

ages. Its old walls have seen the inhabitants slaughtered and the fleets burned twenty times; English, Burgundians, and Spaniards have helped to level it to the dust; yet the brave little town has risen again from its ruins and set to work to restore its thriving commerce. Here it was that a tragical event happened in the thirteenth century, when the powerful Lord de Coucy held his sway. Many a story-teller and troubadour has narrated within the castle walls how he married the lovely Adèle, daughter of the Comte de Ponthieu, and how, as she was passing through a forest with too small an escort for such lawless times, she was attacked by brigands and subjected to the greatest indignities. Her husband, with equal cruelty, wished to efface the affront, and ordered her to be thrown into the sea. Some Fleming, sailing on their way to the Holy Land, saw the beautiful lady floating on the waves, took her on board, and when they arrived, sold her to the Sultan of Amaria, who by kind treatment made her happy in her banishment.

But whilst she forgot her country and her religion, the husband and father were filled with the deepest remorse, and determined to do penance by going to Jerusalem. A fearful tempest stranded them on the territory of the Sultan, by whose orders they were thrown into a dungeon. The day after, a great festival was held in honour of the Sultan's birthday; and according to the custom of the country, the people came to the palace to demand a Christian captive to torture and kill. The choice fell upon the Comte de Ponthieu. When he was brought out, and the astonished Adèle recognised him, she said to her husband: 'Give me, I pray you, this captive; he knows how to play at chess and draughts.' Her request was granted; and then another captive appeared, the Lord de Coucy. 'Let me also have this one,' she said; 'he can tell wonderful stories to amuse me.' 'Willingly,' answered the obliging Sultan. Recognition was soon established among the three; pardon was sought, and granted; and Adèle, under pretext of taking a sail, escaped with the two captives, and landed in France. They regained

their own possessions, and from that time lived a life of great piety.

Leaving St Valery, let us take a pleasant excursion to see the fine old feudal castle of Ram-bures. There is probably not a more perfect specimen of the military architecture of the middle ages in the whole of France. We walk round it and admire the four enormous brick towers rising at the angles of the quadrangular fortress, crowned with the roofs then so much in favour, resembling pepper-boxes. The walls, many yards in thickness, are pierced with embrasures; where we now stand they seem like a narrow slit; but when we enter, there is ample room for a man and horse to stand in them. Everything is prepared for a long defence: descending into the vaults, there are stables for a number of horses, ovens to bake bread for a regiment, wells, and store-rooms ready to contain any amount of provisions. Below these cold dark excavations are the still more melancholy *oubliettes*, a suitable name, where the prisoners were too often forgotten and allowed to die a lingering death of starvation. Here the lord of the place could without any trial confine his vassals who refused to grind their wheat at his mill, bake their bread at his bakehouse, or get in his harvest at the loss of their own. Such was the state of affairs in these olden times!

The shore-line takes us to the oldest hereditary fief of the French monarchy, a spot rendered interesting from its connection with Joan of Arc. A few houses, half-buried in sand, form what the people still persist in calling 'the port and town of Crotot,' once so flourishing as the centre of commerce for the wines of the south and the wool and dye-woods of Spain, which were shipped off from here to the cloth-workers of Flanders. When it belonged to our kings Edward II. and III., the port dues amounted to no less than twelve hundred pounds, a very large sum for those days; now they are but thirty-two pounds a year. The honest hospitable fisherman are always ready to rescue any distressed ship driven on to the coast by storms. It is remembered that one of their race, whose name was Vandenthum, saved the Duc de Larochehoucauld. In the worst days of the Revolution, when it was a crime to bear a title, this most devoted of the adherents of Louis XVI. fled to Crotot, in the hope of getting to England. Before getting into Vandenthum's boat, the Duke gave his valet half of a card, the ace of hearts, saying: 'When this good fisherman brings you the other half, I shall be safe on the other side; pray take it at once to my wife.' The card was delivered; and every year after the Duke shewed his gratitude by making Vandenthum spend a fortnight with him, treating him in a princely manner, seating him at his side, and recognising him as his deliverer.

It was in the strong castle of this place where Joan of Arc was imprisoned in 1430. From Amiens came a priest to receive her confession and administer the sacrament; and many ladies and citizens from the same place, sympathising with her under her cruel treatment, visited her. Thanking them warmly and kissing them, she exclaimed, weeping: 'These are good people; may it please God, when my days are ended, that I may be buried in this place.' If you talk to the fishermen's wives here, they speak of this heroic woman with profound respect; and singularly enough, the

last branch of her family has settled among the people she loved. They are living in comparative poverty, having a place in the Custom-house, but are proud of the letters-patent which authorise them to adopt the name of Du Lis, and bear on their arms the *fleur de lis* of the Bourbons.

Six miles away we come to the once celebrated church of Rue, with a dismantled fortress, a belfry, clock tower, and gibbet of the olden times. St Wulphy was a saint of miracle-working power, and to him the church was dedicated; but in the incessant attacks of the Normans his relics were carried off. The saint still cared for his church, and prayed God to give his people something better; whereupon some workmen digging near Golgotha found buried in the earth a crucifix, sculptured by Nicodemus. This was set adrift at Jaffa in a boat without oars, sail, or pilot, and soon stranded on the shore of Rue. In the present day it is trade which turns villages into towns; then it was faith; wherever the relics of a saint were to be found, the most obscure place grew rapidly in riches and population. Thus pilgrims flocked to this out-of-the-way place from all parts of France; the popes granted indulgences to those who visited it, and it became a rival to St James of Compostella. Here was often found Louis XI., who had great need for desiring pardon, and miser though he was, left behind him rich presents. Of the fine old church nothing remains but a chapel, which is a masterpiece of architectural beauty; the legend of the bark is represented on the tympanum, and on the façade are statues of several of the kings of France. All its rich treasures and the miraculous cross were carried away at the end of the last century by the faithless dragoons of the Republican army.

Musing on the changes of time and public opinion, we look far away over the downs towards Abbeville, and under the shadow of the large forest which darkens the horizon, call to mind the great victory which the armies of England gained on the field of Crécy. Edward III. knew the country well, for his youthful days had been passed at the Château Garli-les-Rue, which belonged to his mother, Isabel of Ponthieu. Walking over the ground, the spots where the carnage was most terrible may be traced by the names given to tracts of land, such as the *Marche à Carognes*, meaning 'The Pathway of Corpses.' In the morning, when the fields are covered with dew, the deep ditches where the victims were buried may be distinctly traced, for there, curiously enough, the earth remains damp much longer than in the other furrows. Standing in the green forest-road is an old cross of sandstone, which the peasants tell you is the spot where the body of the king of Bohemia was found. He was one of the most faithful allies of the French king, and blind; but in the midst of the battle he desired his two faithful knights to lead his horse in, that he might strike one last blow for his friend. All the three fell together in front of the hill, from which the English archers drew their bow-strings with such fatal effect that ten thousand of the French were left dead on the battle-field. Here it was that the gallant Black Prince won his spurs, and the crest of feathers which still pertains to our Prince of Wales.

Starting on the road to Abbeville, and passing

the large beetroot manufactories which abound in Picardy, we gain a beautiful view of the fertile vale of the Somme; but our destination is eastward, to visit St Riquier. Two monks from Bangor are said to have preached the gospel here 590 A.D., and incurring the anger of the idolatrous people, they were attacked and would have perished but for the help of one of their converts named Riquier. After their departure he became a priest, and continued the good work, founding an abbey, which King Dagobert richly endowed. This exquisite building was built in the form of a triangle, as a symbol of the Trinity. The number three was everywhere reproduced; three doors opened into the vestibule, three chapels rose at the angles, three altars, three pulpits, the three symbols of Constantinople, of St Athanasius, and the apostles. Three hundred monks and thirty-three choristers sang in the processions, and finally the abbot led daily three hundred poor persons.

Whilst the ruthless hands of the whitewasher have destroyed innumerable frescoes, there still remain two large mural paintings in the treasury of this church, one being a representation of the translation of the relics of St Riquier, the other a Dance of Death. The latter is divided into three compartments; in the first are three skeletons, one digging a grave, another holding a spade (the emblem of demolition), the third an arrow, the instrument of death. Richly-dressed well-mounted cavaliers appear in the second, setting out for the chase with falcons on their wrists; but at the sight of the skeletons the horses rear, and one of the falcons is flying away. In the last, persons of every rank are walking together to the grave; a wild and poetical teaching, which recalled, in the midst of the inequalities of the feudal days, the certainty of their all meeting in the final resting-place.

It was in these well-known funeral allegories that religious thought took refuge, whilst burlesque associations or brotherhoods traversed the towns in disguised bands, and the troubadours sang their romances of ladies catching hearts in their nets to put into the box of forgetfulness. Christian art endeavoured to bring men back to the remembrance of God by showing them death under various aspects. Sometimes the artist placed him with a coffin under his arm in the cottage of kings; or as a guest at the marriage-feast standing behind the bride; or as a wood-cutter lopping off branches laden with nobles and citizens; as if to illustrate that however high the position in this world, all must at last fall.

To St Riquier, Charlemagne loved to repair, and he made it a centre of learning, like Tours, Metz, and St Gall. Some remains of the old towers of his day still remain, as well as the mosaic roses which he sent for from Rome to adorn it. In the porch were buried two abbots who were killed in 853, in one of the numerous incursions of the Normans. Their bodies were found wrapped in sheep-skins, when the beautiful church of the fifteenth century rose from the ashes of the old one. Among the many statues of saints which adorn the main portal is a very noble one of Joan of Arc, holding a half-broken lance; her eyes are cast down, and the expression is that of a perfectly beautiful but sad countenance. She was confined in the castle for a few days.

Upon the beauties of Amiens we must not

dwell; it was a centre for the cultivation of poetry, sculpture, and the fine arts throughout the middle ages. The inhabitants worked at its glorious cathedral for sixty-eight years, forming a kind of camp, and relieving each other as they cut the stones, singing canticles the while. The tall spire was destroyed by a thunderbolt in 1527; but two zealous village carpenters determined to rebuild it; and six years later it was finished. Many monograms testify to the visits of master-masons, who came to admire the work of the Picardy peasants; the eighteen hundred medallions detailing the history of the world, besides many bas-reliefs carved by the old workmen of Amiens. Abbeville is also a most interesting old town, not only for its past monuments, but as the home of that modern geologist M. de Perthes, who has left his museum of relics to the city. We must bid adieu to Picardy, to its hardy peasants, delicious elder, and well-cultivated plains with regret, as being not the least interesting among the French provinces, and well worthy the notice of the wandering traveller.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XXVII.—AT THE STANNARIES.

‘We shall have a delightful day,’ said young Lady Alice joyously, as the sweet scent of the bruised heather and the steam of the wet earth came floating on the breeze, and the clouds rolled off majestically seawards, leaving the broad surface of Dartmoor, like a purple robe dashed with green, flecked and dappled by the dancing sunbeams. ‘A delightful day for our peep at the old Stannaries,’ repeated the girl. ‘The air will be all the fresher and the weather steeper, for the heavy shower of this morning.’

Lady Alice, the youngest and, some said, the cleverest of the Earl’s daughters, was an indulged child, and there was a carriage at High Tor which she regarded as her very own. This was a low wagonette, built of light esier-work, lined with dark blue, and drawn by a hairy-heeled pony, quite as shaggy as a bear, and not much bigger than a Newfoundland dog. The villagers for miles around were tolerably familiar with the jingle of the bells that were attached to the pony’s collar; but on the present occasion the boy in livery who held the reins had been hidden to strike into one of the rugged roads that led into the moor itself, where hamlets were scarce, and even isolated dwellings few and far between.

‘It would be a thousand pities,’ said Lady Alice presently, turning towards Ethel, who sat beside her in the wagonette, ‘not to show you the Stannaries—which are among our principal mons herabouts—before the winter-storms set in. It is not always pleasant or quite safe to go so far into the moor after apple-harvest.’

‘But you forget,’ said Ethel, smiling, ‘that I, in my ignorance, have not the very faintest idea as to what Stannaries may be.’

‘Is it possible!’ exclaimed the child, turning upon her governess a glance of that pitying wonder with which the very young receive a confession of deficient information on the part of their elders. ‘Did you really never hear, Miss Gray, of our Cornish and Devon tin-mines?—we call them Stannaries because *stannum* is the Latin word for

tin, you know—which were worked, ever so many hundreds and thousands of years ago, by Phœnicians and Carthaginians and Jews I believe, and Romans I am sure. Very ancient they are at any rate, and very curious; and I want to shew you ours, the only ones in this part of Dartmoor, with the stone huts of the miners still standing, although no tin has been taken out of the lodes for many a long year.

Ethel laughed good-humouredly at her own scanty stock of local lore.

'I have read,' she said gently, 'of tin mines in Cornwall, and of that place with the odd name Marazion, which made people fancy the Lost Tribes were to be looked for somewhere near the Land's End, and how the Phœnicians came of old in ships to fetch the tin away. But I did not know they came to Devon too.'

'O yes; they did,' persisted Lady Alice, eager for the credit of her county. 'Our workings are quite as ancient as the great Cornish mines, though not so big. And there was once a Mayor of Halgaver, and a sort of diggers' law on the moor, as there is among the gold-seekers in Australia now. I have heard Papa speak of it. But there is the farmhouse'—pointing to a dwelling, screened by black firs from the cold north-east winds, which crowned a swelling ridge of high ground—'where we can leave the pony till we have finished our explorings. You are a capital walker, and so am I; and the way to enjoy the moor and understand it is to cross it on foot.'

The pony, wagonette, and lad in livery being duly left at the farm, the two girls set off together to traverse the distance that intervened between the ridge on which the house was built and a bleak table-land from which cropped up, like fossil mushrooms, many gray stones of various shapes.

'Those are the Circles—the Rounds as the poor people call them,' said Lady Alice in her character of cicerone. 'Nobody in these parts cares to be near them after dark. They are said to be haunted, but that is all nonsense of course.'

'They look cold and ghostly enough even in broad daylight,' said Ethel, as they pushed on along a broad smooth track of emerald green, one of several green belts that varied the dull purple of the sea of heather. Overhead, on tireless wing, the hawk wheeled. The lapwing, with complaining note, skirred the plain, striving with world-old artifice of drooping wing and broken flight, to lure away the human intruders from her flat nest, full of speckled eggs. The moorland hare, dark-furred and long-limbed, broke abruptly from her seat and galloped off unpursued. The Circles were reached at last, and proved to be quaint rings of dilapidated buildings, all of unheven stone and of the rudest construction. Here and there the huts, roof and walls alike composed of rough slabs, were intact. Nothing could be more desolate than the appearance of these bare, gaunt hovels, reared by the hands of the long dead, standing solitary in the midst of a desert.

'Here they lived once upon a time, those old people, the heathen miners, whose bronze tools and lumps of ore and morsels of charred wood are even now sometimes picked up by boys who hunt for birds' eggs on the moor. They worked near the surface, and never drove their galleries very deep into the earth. And then came Chris-

tin times, when these hovels were inhabited by very different dwellers, until at last the mines were given up as no longer worth the labour of winning the tin.'

Ethel looked around her with a kind of awe. She had imagination enough to enable her to realise the dim Past, when these deserted huts were peopled by inhabitants strange of garb and speech, gnomes of the mine utterly unlike to any who now tread English ground. In fancy she could behold the motley throng of Pagan toilers, whose bronze picks had once rung against gneiss and granite, mica and sandstone, on the now silent moor. There the Briton, his fair skin stained with woad, and the small and swarthy mountaineer whose forefathers had preceded the Celt in ownership of the land, had laboured side by side with Spaniard, Moor, and Goth, with Scythian, Arab, and Indian—slaves all, and mostly captives in war, whom the cruel policy of Rome consigned to far-off regions of the earth, much as our justice stocked Virginian plantations and Australian cattle-runs with the offspring of ignorance and crime.

It was at the grave as it were of a dead industry that Ethel now stood. The ground, honey-combed by what resembled gigantic rabbit-burrows, was strewn here and there with dross and scorie, and blackened by fire, wherever the remains of a rude kiln told of smelting carried on long ago.

'I have all sorts of things to shew you,' said Lady Alice impatiently. 'Just look into one of the huts, and then wonder how human beings could ever have made a home of such a place. See! It is just like a stone bee-hive—no windows. That was for warmth, I suppose. The little light they wanted came in at the door, no doubt. And up above there, where you see the hole between the stones, the smoke must have found its way out, after it had half-choked the lungs and blinded the eyes of those inside the hut. They wanted a good peat-fire though, to keep them alive when the great snows of winter fell; and they had it too, for just see how hard and black the earthen floor has become in the course of years. Now then for the mine where the Roman sword was found, and then for the Pixies' Well.'

The Pixies' Well proved to be a curious natural depression in the rocky soil, thimble-shaped, and about twenty feet in depth, carpeted with moss of the brightest green from the brink to where the water glimmered starlike from amid rank weeds beneath.

'They say the fairies used to dance round this well on Midsummer night and dip stolen children in the water, that they might never long to go back to earth again, but live contentedly in Elf-land. Our Devonshire people believe all sorts of things still, you must know, though they are getting ashamed of talking about them before strangers.—Are you tired, Miss Gray?'

Miss Gray was not tired, and her mercurial pupil thereupon proposed a visit to a new attraction.

'The idea of it came into my head while we were looking down into the well,' explained Lady Alice; 'and though the Hunger Hole is not one of the sights of the Stannaries, still if you are not afraid of a longer walk, we might visit it and yet be at home in good time. It is a mile or more from here.'

'That is an odd name, the Hunger Hole,' said Ethel. 'I suppose there is some legend to account for so ominous a word?'

'There is indeed,' said the Earl's youngest daughter as, by Ethel's side, she left the ring of ruinous huts and passed along a strong causeway that led towards the west; 'and moreover, in this case there can be no doubt about its being true. A young Jacobite—it was just after the Northern rising in 1715—fled to a country-house near here, Morford Place, where his mother's family lived, hoping to be sheltered and enabled to embark secretly for France. There had been treachery at work, however, for the fugitive's intentions were revealed to the authorities; and on the morning of the very day when he arrived in mean disguise, constables and soldiers had searched the mansion from garret to cellar.

'That the poor refugee should be concealed at Morford seemed impossible, and yet as the roads were beset and the harbours watched, escape over sea was not for the moment to be thought of. The squire of Morford bethought him of the place that we are going to see, which was then known to very few, and where priests had often been hidden, when every Jesuit who came to England carried his life in his hand. So young Mr John Grahame—that was his name—was lodged in the grotto that we shall presently see, and sometimes one of the ladies of the family, his cousins, and sometimes a trusty servant, carried him food. But the poor young man had some secret enemy who could not rest until assured of his destruction, for just as the rigour of the pursuit seemed to be over, and it was arranged that the fugitive should be put on board a smuggling craft bound for the French coast, Morford Place was again searched, and a chain of sentries posted, with orders to shoot whoever tried to pass them by.

'Day after day dragged on, and no food could be conveyed to the unfortunate occupant of the Hiding Hole—the Priest's Hole, as they called it then—while the dragoons scoured the country, questioning the folks in every village if a stranger had been seen. No doubt it was hoped that famine would force the Jacobite to leave his retreat; but after a time the soldiers grew tired of waiting, or the authorities imagined they had been on a false scent. At anyrate the troops were withdrawn. But when some of the Morford family stole, trembling to the unfrequented spot where their luckless kinsman lay hid, they stood aghast to see the raven and the carrion-crow flapping and screaming about the grotto—a sure sign that there was death within. True enough, poor young Grahame had perished of want, sooner than venture forth to be dragged to the jail and the gibbet; and ever since that day the place has borne the name of the Hunger Hole.'

By this time the stony causeway had given place to a narrow footway that led through one of those swamps that vary the unmdained surface of Dartmoor. To left and right rose tall reeds, thick enough to simulate a tropical cane-brake, while wild flax, mallows, and stunted alder-bushes abounded. The moor-hen sprang from her nest among the bulrushes that bordered the sullen pools of discoloured water, and the snake crept hissing through the coarse grass, as if angry at the unwonted trespass on his haunts. The unattractive ground, even at that dry season of the year,

shook beneath the feet of the explorers; and it was easy for Ethel to give credence to her pupil's statement that even the hardy moorman avoided Bitternley Swamp in winter.

'The place took its name from the bitterns that used to abound here,' said Lady Alice; 'but there is no nook so lonely for the men whom the London bird-stuffers employ, and the last bittern was shot two years since. Soon there won't be a feathered creature, except pheasants and partridges and perhaps the saucy sparrows, left alive.—But that—as they passed a sheet of dark water, stained by the peat of the morass until it resembled ink in hue—is Blackpool; and yonder, among those rocks on the bank above, is the Hunger Hole. You cannot see the opening of the grotto from here—that is the beauty of it—but wait till we get quite close, and then you will understand how naturally the cave was made to hide in.

Even when the two girls had got clear of the swamp and scrambled up the rude flight of steps, nearly effaced by time and rains, that facilitated the scaling of the precipitous bank, Ethel could see no signs of the grotto they sought, until her youthful companion pulled aside the hazel boughs, that grew between two angles of lichen-incrusted rock, and disclosed, about a yard above their heads, a narrow fissure, too low for a person of ordinary stature to enter without stooping, and even then half-hidden by grass and brambles.

'That is the Hunger Hole,' said Lady Alice triumphantly. 'A fugitive may lie concealed here, I think, if the enemy were ranging all the moor to capture him. It is higher inside than at the mouth, and the bridge within gives access to the inner chamber. Come; we must be quick.—Ah! there is no danger,' added the girl, mistaking the cause of her companion's hesitation.

'I am not afraid; I was merely thinking of the sad story of this place,' said Ethel with a shudder that she could not repress. And passing over the boulders of loose rock, they entered Indian file into the Hunger Hole.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE HUNGER HOLE.

Ethel, on following her young pupil through the darkling portal of the cave, moved forward at first with extreme precaution; but gradually, as her eyes became accustomed to the dim mysterious light that reigned within, she could distinguish that the grotto really did increase in height within two paces of the entrance, and that it was quite possible to stand upright without inconvenience beneath the rocky roof. She saw that she was in a natural cavern of small dimensions, the irregular level of the floor being moistened by the water that oozed through a crevice between two mossy stones and trickled onwards until it fell, with a monotonous dripping sound, into a chasm some ten or eleven feet in breadth, over which a wooden bridge, the timbers of which were black with age and coated with colourless growths of fungi and mosses, afforded the means of passing.

'They say the Hunger Hole was known and used from very early times,' observed Lady Alice, stepping fearlessly upon the dilapidated bridge, of which the hand-rails, if such there had been, had long since rotted away. 'But its very existence was kept secret by the Morfords of Morford and two or three other families of the neighbouring

gentry and their trusty retainers, until after that sad tragedy of which I told you. You will find the inner chamber more comfortable than the outer cave, where the spring is.'

And indeed Ethel found herself in a recess, somewhat smaller than the exterior portion of the cavern, but dry, and free alike from trickling moisture and the unwholesome growth of cryptogams, that carpeted the slimy floor of the antechamber through which they had passed. At one extremity of the chamber a sort of bench or bed-place had been cut, evidently by human agency, in the stony wall. Light came filtered down through boughs and creeping-plants from above the chasm, where a glimpse of the sky might be caught; while beneath, some subterranean pool or streamlet, to judge by the drip, drip, of the water that ran over the mossy lip of the fissure, certainly existed.

'Life must have been very dreary here, spent in solitude, and with the haunting apprehension that at each instant the secret of the hiding-hole might be betrayed or discovered,' said Ethel, again shivering, as though the air of the cave had been icy cold. 'It would be almost better to face any danger than to linger'—

A sudden creaking and cracking, as of breaking wood-work, interrupted Ethel's speech, and was instantly followed by a dull heavy plunge, and then a splashing sound, as though something weighty had fallen from a considerable height into water below.

'Good heavens, the bridge—the bridge!' Such were the words that rose simultaneously to the lips of both the girls, and by a common impulse pupil and governess hurried to the verge of the abyss. Their instinct of alarm had been but too accurate in divining what had occurred. The bridge—the rotten old timbers of which had for centuries been exposed to the corroding influence of time and decay—had disappeared into the depths below, and now an impassable chasm yawned between the young explorers of the cave and the doorway by which they had entered it. They fell back and looked at one another with white scared faces.

Ethel was the first to recover her self-command. 'This is awkward,' she said, trying to smile, 'for we shall be late in reaching High Tor, and I am afraid the Countess will be anxious. Of course, as soon as it is known that we have not returned to the farm where the carriage and pony were left, search will be made.'

'No one will think of looking here,' returned young Lady Alice, with a disconsolate shake of the head. 'We are fully two miles from the Stannaries, and everybody will suppose that we have returned thence by the footpath that crosses Bramberry Common, or the bridle-road that skirts Otter Pool and the Red Rock—short-cuts both of them, and favourite paths of mine, as is known. I am, unluckily, a wilful child, and have a sad character for roving over hill and dale, so that even Mamma will not be frightened at the first. And—and, another thing that is bad. Nobody will suspect us of crossing Bitternley Swamp, even in fine weather, without a gentleman or a man of some sort, to take care of us in case of need. The truth is, Miss Gray, it was a silly thing to do, a fool-hardy trick to play even on a day like this; for lives have been lost there often, as all oh the

moor know. We got across dry-footed or nearly so; but it might have been different. My brother said once, I was as bad to follow as a Will-o'-the-Wisp could be.' The girl laughed, as though to reanimate her own drooping spirits, but the sullen echoes of the cave gave back the laughter hollowly.

'Can we not make some signal—call aloud perhaps, to notify our plight to any who may be passing near?' asked Ethel, after a moment's consideration. But even as she spoke she felt the futility of the expedient she had suggested.

'Nobody may pass this way for weeks to come,' said Lady Alice despondently. 'You don't know, you can't guess how very desolate Dartmoor is at most times. We might scream ourselves hoarse, without getting an answer from any voice but that of the peewit by day and the fern-owl by night. No; I was thinking I could perhaps get across.'

But a deliberate survey of the chasm proved the hopelessness of such an attempt. A trained gymnast with nerves exceptionally steady could readily have taken the leap, although to slip or stumble was to incur a certain and miserable death in the unseen waters below. But even the hardy maidens who tend their brass-belled kine among the Alpine pastures of Tyrol would have flinched from the effort to spring from one side of that yawning gulf to the other. Then for a time, a long time, there was silence, unbroken save by the regular plash and tinkle of the water, as it trickled over the floor of the outer cave and fell over into the black abyss below.

'They must surely take the alarm at High Tor,' said Ethel after a space. 'There will be a hue-and-cry through all the neighbourhood. The worst that can happen will be that we may spend the night here, and be very cold and very hungry.'

'Hungry! Yes, we are likely to be that, before we are found,' half-petulantly interrupted Lady Alice. And then there was no more said for a longer time than before.

Ethel's mind was busy as she sat side by side with her pupil on the rough-hewn bench of stone that had been the death-bed of the luckless Jacobite refugee. How little had she thought, when listening an hour or two ago, to the legend of John Grahame's death, that she who told and she who hearkened to the tale would soon be shut up in that dismal lair, to suffer hardship, perhaps even to—No, not to die, so near to home and friends; that was a supposition too wild to be harboured! They must be sought out, found, delivered from the prison to which accident had consigned them. Some one would pass. Some one might even then be within hearing, and be rambling on all-unconscious of the predicament of those within. So strongly did the idea that friendly ears might be near present itself to Ethel, that she started to her feet, calling aloud again and again for help. The hollow echoes of the cave returned the sound, as though in mockery, while Lady Alice sat mute and listless on the rocky bench. Presently she too sprang up. 'I cannot bear it,' cried the young girl, in her quick impetuous way. 'I would sooner run the risk of fifty deaths than remain here, listening to the dreadful drip, drip, of the water as it falls into the pool or the brook beneath. We can't, now

the bridge is gone, cross the fissure. But perhaps, if you would help me, I might manage to scramble to the top of the rocks above here where the light comes down, and at anyrate wave a handkerchief, or do something to attract attention if any one comes near?

Ethel glanced up at the ragged rocks draped with weed and bramble, and then down at the gaping chasm, into which a false step would probably hurl any aspirant who should prove unequal to the attempt.

'It is for me to try it, my dear, not you,' she said quietly, but with a resolution that was not to be shaken. 'I am taller and stronger; and besides, how could I meet the Countess again if I allowed you to run into a danger I shrank from?' And without further preamble Ethel grasped a tough tendril of the ivy that hung within reach, and by clinging to every crevice or angle of the rock that could yield support to foot or hand, succeeded in gaining a ledge of stone, above which a tall slender hazel shot up into the free air. But to climb the few feet of bare stone above her was impossible. 'It is idle; I cannot do it,' she said sadly.

It did indeed begin to seem a hopeless case, that is supposing that young Lady Alice was correct in her estimate of the loneliness of the spot and of the unlikeliness of success.

'I cannot reach the top; the rock is as steep as a wall,' said Ethel, again looking down from amidst the ferns and foxgloves, the ivy trails and ropes of bramble, that half-filled the aperture.

'That tall nut-tree, it is close to your hand,' cried the quick-witted young damsel below. 'Could you not pull it towards you, tie your handkerchief to the topmost bough, and let it spring up again? That would give us a chance, should any one come near.'

With some difficulty Ethel succeeded in grasping the tough stem of the tall hazel, and bending it until she was able to make fast her handkerchief, as Alice had suggested, to the uppermost twig. Up sprang the slender stem again the instant it was released, and the white pennon fluttered out, clear of the rocks, in the moorland breeze.

'We have hoisted our flag,' said Lady Alice blithely, 'to let them know we are at home.' But as hour after hour went by, and the longed-for help came not, and the increasing gloom of the faint cool light that filled the grotto told of the waning of the day, the spirits of Ethel's young charge lost their buoyancy.

'I wish at least,' she said peevishly, 'that tire-some dripping of the water would stop. I feel as though it would drive me mad. Why not try the jump back over the chasm? Even if one fell in, it would be better so than to die by inches.'

Ethel did her best to impart comfort. But her pupil would not be comforted.

'No, no!' she said repeatedly; 'they will not find us till—till it is too late. The last place where any one would dream of looking is the Hunger Hole. It is so far off that nobody will imagine we walked all the way; and then, as none know of the broken bridge, it will never occur to any one that we are shut up here. They will believe us to be drowned. It is not difficult to get smothered in a swamp hereabouts. And

the pools will be dragged and the rivers examined, and still the riddle will remain unsolved.' Presently the girl crept up to Ethel's side and stole her hand into that of her governess. 'I want you to forgive me, Miss Gray—Ethel dear,' she said in a low voice. 'It is my wilfulness that has been the cause of all.'

Ethel answered her soothingly; and with a great sob young Lady Alice, who was no coward, kept down her rising tears. For an hour or more they sat silent, hand in hand.

'Do you remember,' whispered Alice De Vere, after a time, 'an old, old song, *The Mistletoe Bough*? Maud sings it. I am afraid it will come true for us, and the Hunger Hole will have a new story.'

SOME ANIMAL ENEMIES OF MAN.

It is a somewhat remarkable fact that the domain of human existence is singularly liable to be intruded upon by lower forms of both animal and plant life, which may in some cases inflict injury of great extent upon man's possessions or even upon his bodily frame. Not so long ago a foreign member of the beetle-fraternity threatened the interests of agriculturists in this country, and caused consternation to prevail throughout the length and breadth of the land. And although the alarm with which the advent of the insect-intruder was hailed has now disappeared, agriculturists would inform us that their especial territory is beset with other insect-enemies which invariably damage their crops, and which in certain seasons cause the disastrous failure of many a thriving field. Witness in proof of this the ravages of the 'turnip-fly' and its neighbours, which blight the crops in some districts to an extent which must be seen to be realised. Or take the case of the hop-grower, whose favourable prospects largely depend on the absence of a small species of plant-lice which specially affects these plants, and which in certain seasons may cause, by their enormous increase, the total failure of this important crop. Nor do our insect-foes confine their ravages to growing-crops. When the fruits of the harvest have been duly gathered in and stored within the granary, even there they are attacked by minute pests. Numberless insects—flies, beetles, and other forms—select the granary as a nursery or suitable place for the upbringing of their young; the larvæ or young insects feeding on the grain and destroying large quantities by their increase as well as by their destructive habits. Apart from the domain of agriculture, however, lower forms of animal and plant life powerfully affect man's estate. The growth and increase of lower plants produce many skin-diseases; and if it be true—already rendered probable—that epidemics are propagated through the agency of living 'germs' which increase after the fashion of lower forms of life, then it may be held that we are liable to be attacked on every side by enemies, insignificant as to size, but of incalculable power when their numbers are taken into con-

sideration. Parasites of various kinds ravage man's flocks and even affect his own health, so that it is perfectly clear that we do not by any means enjoy any immunity whatever from the enemies which living nature in its prolific abundance produces, and which select man and man's belongings as their lawful spoil.

The animal enemies of man, concerning which we purpose to say a few words in the present paper, belong to a different sphere from that at which we have just glanced. Some of the most powerful marauders upon human territory belong to the Mollusca or group of the true shell-fish, and present themselves as near relations of the oysters, mussels, and their allies. The molluscs which become of interest to man in other than a gastronomic sense, possess, like the famous oyster, a bivalve shell, or one consisting of two halves. In the first of man's molluscan enemies to which we may direct attention, the shell is of small size, and so far from inclosing the body of the animal, appears to exist merely as an appendage to one extremity, which for want of a better term, we may name the head—although, as every one knows, no distinct head exists in the oyster and its kind. Suppose that from this head-extremity, bearing its two small shells, a long worm-like or tubular body is continued, and we may then form a rough and ready, but correct idea of the appearance of the famous 'ship-worm'—the *Teredo* of the naturalist. This animal was first styled the 'ship-worm' by Linnaeus and his contemporaries; and in truth it resembles a worm much more closely than its shell-fish neighbours. As a worm, indeed, it was at first classified by naturalists. But appearances in zoological science are as deceptive as they are known proverbially to be in common life, and the progress of research afterwards duly discovered beneath the worm-like guise of the teredo, all the characters of a true mollusc. The long body of the mollusc simply consists of the breathing-tubes, by which water is admitted to the gills, being extremely developed, the body proper being represented by the small portion to which the two small shells are attached.

The importance of the ship-worm arises from the use it makes of these apparently insignificant shells as a boring-apparatus; and any sea-side visitor, residing on a coast where an ocean-swell or severe storms strew the shore with drift-wood, has but to use his eyes to assure himself of the extent and perfection of the ship-worm's labours. Pieces of drift-wood may be seen to be literally riddled by these molluscs, which live in the burrows they thus excavate. Each habitation is further seen to be coated with a limy layer formed by the tubular body, and the boring for the most part is noted to proceed in the direction of the grain of the wood. The little excavator turns aside in its course, however, when it meets with a knot in the wood, and an iron nail appears of all things to be the ship-worm's greatest obstacle—a fact which has been taken advantage of, as we shall presently see, by way of arresting its work of destruction.

Linnaeus long ago designated the ship-worm as

the *calamitas navium*, and although perhaps the expression as applied to ships is somewhat far-fetched—save in the case of broken-down hulks—and utterly inapplicable in this age of iron, there can be little doubt that regarded relatively to wooden piles, piers, and like erections, the ship-worm is unquestionably a calamity personified. So, at any rate, thought the Dutch in the years 1731–32, when the teredo began to pay attentions of too exclusive a nature to the wooden piles which supported the great earth-works or 'dikes' that keep the sea from claiming the United Provinces as its own. A Dutchman has been well said to pay great attention to two things which are euphoni-ously and shortly expressed by the words 'dams' and 'drains.' The former keep the sea from invading his territory, and the latter aid in protecting him personally from the effects of the perennial damp amidst which he exists. The ship-worm in the years just mentioned caused terror to prevail through the length and breadth of the Netherlands, through its appearance in large numbers in the wooden piles of the dams or dikes. On these piles the fortunes of Holland may be said to depend; and the foundations of the Dutch empire might therefore be regarded, correctly enough, as having been sapped and threatened by an envious enemy in the shape of a mollusc, and one belonging to by no means the highest group of that division of animals. The alarm spread fast through the Netherlands, and the government was not slow to appreciate the danger, or to offer a reward of large amount for the discovery of any plan which would successfully stay the progress of such dreaded invaders.

Inventors, it might be remarked, are not slow, as a rule, to accept invitations of such generous nature; and if report speaks truly, the office of discriminating between the worthless and feasible projects which were submitted to the Dutch nation on the occasion referred to, could not have proved either an easy or enviable one. Then came the chemists with lotions innumerable, and the inventors of varnishes, paints, and poisons were in a state of hopeful anxiety. But none of these preparations was found to fulfil the required conditions, and the only project which appeared to savour of feasibility was one which was rejected on account of its impracticable nature—namely that of picking the teredos from their burrows like whelks from their shells. The kingdom of Holland thus appeared in a fair way of being undermined by an enemy of infinitely greater power and one less capable of being successfully resisted than the Grand Turk, who once upon a time declared his intention of exterminating the nation with an army whose only weapons were spades and shovels. But after a period of unrestricted labour, the ship-worm 'turned tail' on the Netherlands, and disappeared as suddenly as it had appeared, leaving only a few stragglers to mark the vantage-ground.

Though Britain has not suffered from teredo-epidemics in the same measure as Holland, there can be little doubt that the ravages of this mollusc on the timber of our piers and dockyards, cost us a large sum annually. The stoutest oak is riddled through with the same ease displayed in perforating the softer pine; and in some of our seaport towns, especially on the southern coasts, the yearly estimates for repairs of damage done by the ship-

worm form no inconsiderable item in the government or local expenditure as the case may be. The most effectual plan for the repression of the teredo and for the prevention of its work of destruction appears to be that of protecting the exposed timber by driving therein short nails with very broad heads. These nails form a kind of armour-casing which is rendered more effective through the chemical action of the water in producing rust.

Some molluscs, near neighbours of the teredo, and which burrow for the most part into stone, but occasionally perforate wood, are those belonging to the Piddock-family—the genera *Pholas* and *Saxicava* of the naturalist—celebrated by Pliny of old as phosphorescent animals. The *Saxicava* have somewhat elongated shells, by means of which they burrow in rocks and lie ensconced in their dwelling-places, and whose perforated rock-homes are eagerly sought after by all who delight in forming rockeries in their gardens. These molluscs have ever now caused fears for the safety of Plymouth breakwater, through the persistence with which they excavated their burrows into the substance of the stones. And as has been well pointed out, the destructive action of these molluscs may pave the way for an invadement of the sea; a riddled mass of rock or stone being rendered through their attack liable to disintegration from the action of the waves.

A final example of an animal enemy of man which as regards size is to be deemed insignificant when compared with the teredo, but which nevertheless adds by its destructive work to our annual expenditure, is the little crustacean known as the *Limnoria terebrans*, or popularly as the wood-boring shrimp or 'gribble.' This animal belongs to the group including the familiar 'Slaters' or 'Wood-lice,' found under stones and in damp situations, and by means of its powerful jaws burrows deeply into wood of all kinds. Occasionally, the ship-worm and gribble have been found at work in the same locality and have committed ravages of great extent; the latter, on account of its small size, being more difficult of detection and eradication than its molluscan neighbour.

The consideration of a subject such as the present, it may lastly be remarked, possesses a phase not without some degree of consolation to minds which, if incapable of seeing 'good in everything,' may nevertheless believe in the adjustment and counterbalancing of most of Nature's operations. The repression of animal life by parasites may in one sense prove a gain to nature at large, viewed from a Malthusian stand-point, although humanly considered, there may be differences of opinion regarding the applicability of the opinion to the case of man. But if the ravages of the teredo and its neighbours on the works of man are to be considered as a veritable affliction, we must not fail to think also of the service these animals render in clearing the ocean of vast masses of drift-wood, which, liberated from the mouths of all the great rivers of the world, would speedily accumulate to check navigation and impede commerce in many quarters of the world. The genius of Brunel, which discerned in the manner of the ship-worm's burrowing the true method of excavating the tunnel associated with his name, and which thus improved engineering science by a

happy thought and observation, may also be regarded as bearing testimony to the consoling fact that there exist few evils which are entirely unmixt with good.

MY JOURNEY TO BRIGHTON.

A FEW years ago, in the second week of September, I found myself, very much against my inclination, still inhaling the dusty atmosphere of my London chambers, Lincoln's Inn. I was anxious that the suit upon which I was engaged should be ready for the commencement of the November term; it was unusually intricate; the client a man of high rank and importance, or I should not have allowed it to detain me in town after the 12th of August, at which date all the ordinary temptations had assailed me and had been resisted; and now having relinquished my favourite recreations, both grouse and partridge shooting, all my friends dispersed far and wide, and no companion left in town with whom I cared to spend the remaining weeks of the long vacation, I was quite at a loss whither to betake myself for a change, so necessary to the exhausted legal brain at that period of the year. I turned over the leaves of my *Bradshaw* in the hope of gaining an idea, but its maddening pages left me more unsettled than ever. At last I suddenly resolved to run down to Brighton by the afternoon express, which I found would just give me time to go home for a portmanteau and make the few necessary arrangements for a short absence; one thing only being clear to my mind, that I should not stay long away.

The transit from Lincoln's Inn to Eaton Place, where as a bachelor I still resided with my mother, was rapidly accomplished; and if I had not been unexpectedly detained at home, I should have reached Victoria in comfortable time; as it was, my hansom only drove into the station as the bell was ringing for the train to start, and I hastily jumped into the first carriage in which I could find room, as the train moved on. It proved to be a second-class.

As soon as I had settled myself in my corner, I naturally took an observation of my companions. There were but two on my side of the carriage: an elderly and very provincial-looking lady; and opposite to her, and in the farthest corner from my own, a very young one, who at once arrested my attention. That she was quite a girl was very evident, though her face was almost concealed by one of those ugly blue veils which render the complexion livid, the hair green; but in this instance the actual shade of the latter was visible in the rich plaits which were coiled round the back of her head, and such golden-brown is sure to be accompanied by a skin as fair as that of the slender throat of which I just caught a glimpse. The figure was extremely petite and graceful, the dress perfectly plain, and the whole appearance so undoubtedly that of a young lady, that it seemed an almost incongruous circumstance that she should have in her lap a sleeping infant.

The child—richly dressed in ample robes, and carefully veiled—was so small that I guessed it to be scarcely a month old.

Now we all know that there are women who adore babies, and it is possible that there are also some girls who are given to a predilection so incomprehensible to the masculine mind generally. I concluded that I beheld one of these wonders in my youthful fellow-traveller, as at any slight movement of her little charge, she soothed and hushed it in a truly maternal manner; while her companion (no doubt, thought I, the child's nurse) was entirely occupied, as it seemed to me for want of something else to do, with a huge packet of sand-wiches.

Presently our fast train stopped at Croydon. The elderly female prepared to alight; and having assisted her, I offered to hand out the young lady. To my great surprise she said: 'Thank you very much, but I go on to Brighton.'

'And baby too?' I asked.

'O yes!' she replied. 'I never trust him to any one else.'

I was sorely perplexed. Surely, surely she could not be the mother. The thought was preposterous. My curiosity was fairly roused, and I tried to beguile her into conversation on indifferent topics; but she was a discreet little person, and her replies were so monosyllabic, that we arrived at our destination without having become in the least better acquainted. However, as we entered the station, she did at last throw back the ugly veil as she looked somewhat anxiously from the window, and then disclosed to my admiring gaze one of the loveliest faces I had ever looked upon. She appeared to be about sixteen. Large dark eyes bright as stars, were shaded with long black lashes; a rosebud of a mouth, a small delicate nose ever so slightly *retroussé*, and the sudden blush which increased these charms, when I asked if she expected any one to meet her, made a powerful impression upon me *then*, and were destined, though I knew it not at the time, to affect my peace of mind and influence my future life.

I repeated my question before she gave her hesitating answer: 'The fact is I do not expect any one, as my friends do not know that I am alone.'

'Pray allow me then to help you with your luggage, or in any way.'

'Thank you so much, but I have no luggage; the servants brought it all down yesterday.' Then again blushing, she added: 'If you *would* kindly call a fly, it will be all I shall require.'

Before leaving her out of the carriage, I offered (I confess in much tribulation) to relieve her of the infant; but she exclaimed, laughing merrily: 'O no; I really could not trust you for the world.'

So we walked together towards the fly. I having previously observed that her ticket, like my own, was for the first-class. Here was another mystery. In my haste I had been glad to secure a seat anywhere; but I recollected that she must have been settled in her corner of the carriage for some time when I jumped in, as she then appeared to be quite absorbed in a book. We now reached the fly; and not in the least incommoded with her burden, she skipped nimbly up the steps, and requested me to direct the driver to '89 Marine Parade.'

'No mystery about the address at all events,'

I thought as I raised my hat to take leave of my fair companion, who bending towards me, thanked me with the sweet voice and refined pronunciation that I love to hear in women, for the slight service I had rendered her, and left me perfectly bewitched by her grace and beauty. I stood gazing after the fly till it was quite out of sight, before I procured one for myself. I could not understand my feelings. That I, a man of the world, accustomed to the society of attractive women, should in my thirtieth year fall in love at first sight with a little girl scarcely more than half that age, seemed incredible. I could not, and would not believe it. No; it certainly was mere curiosity which induced me to traverse Brighton from morning to night in the hope of seeing her again. For three whole days my rambles were unsuccessful. I fancied once that she passed in a barouche on the drive; but it was only the pose in the carriage which struck me, the face being turned away. At last I began to fear that she and her friends had only stopped at Brighton *en route* for some other destination; and feeling utterly weary of all the frequented parts of the gay town, on the fourth morning I wandered towards Cliftonville. A deep reverie was interrupted by the sound of silvery-toned laughter; and considerably below me on the beach I discerned the fairy form which had become so familiar to my imagination. An adjacent seat was a 'coigne of vantage' whence I could watch her who had so attracted me.

She was attired in a dainty morning-dress of pale blue, looped up over the crisp white frills of an under-skirt; she wore the same hat in which I had first seen her, but without the objectionable veil, and still better, was without the far more objectionable baby. A fashionable-looking lady was seated near her occupied with a book; while the fairy (as I shall call her till I know her name) was frolicking about with a little Maltese dog, which she vainly endeavoured to entice into the sea. The little animal, more like a ball of white wool, scampered readily enough after the pebbles thrown for it as the waves retreated, but rushed back to his mistress, as if for protection from the advancing waters, as they returned and broke upon the shingle.

I watched these gambols with the interest of a school-boy, rather than that of a man of my mature age, and felt that I should never tire of so watching them. Then the elder lady rose and spoke to her companion; the latter immediately picked up the little dog, and they walked slowly up the beach towards the place where I was sitting, without observing me until they were so close that I could not avoid (had I so wished) raising my hat to my late railway companion. She returned my salutation with a blush and a smile; while her friend's inquiring glance was somewhat haughty.

'The gentleman, dear aunt,' explained the fairy, 'who was so kind to me on my journey.'

'I am happy, sir, to have the opportunity of thanking you for your attention to my niece,' was the rejoinder—the words being courteous enough, while the manner was so distant, that it was impossible for me to do otherwise than wish them good-morning, and content myself with gazing after the blue cloud which enveloped my fairy till it had melted away in the distance.

Of course I walked in the same direction the following morning, but no fairy appeared to me. I tried the esplanade, the piers, the shops at all hours, without success. At last one day, which I had almost determined should be my last in Brighton, I thought a book might change my thoughts, and by good-fortune went for it to the library in St James's Street. There, standing in the entrance, I beheld the graceful little lady with her white dog. The stately aunt was at the counter turning over the books; and when at last she had made her choice, she found her niece actually conversing with a comparative stranger. I could see that she was not greatly pleased at the meeting, in spite of her studied politeness; but to my infinite satisfaction, a friendly shower detained her, and she was unavoidably drawn into the conversation, though with true English reserve; her niece, on the contrary, chattered away with all the naïveté of a child.

'We must have a fly, Lily,' said the aunt presently. 'I am sure the rain will not cease for some time.'

'Oh, it is really hardly worth while,' replied that young lady, 'we are so near home, and my considerate fellow-traveller has offered us his umbrella.'

'You are extremely polite, sir,' said the frigid duenna; 'but you require it yourself; we cannot think of—'

'Not at all, I interrupted. 'Pray favour me by using it. Any time will do for returning it; either to the *Old Ship*, where I am staying; or I am here almost every day; or if you will allow me, I would save all trouble by calling for it.' I then presented my card, which bore my town address. It evidently satisfied her, for the icy manner perceptibly thawed; and taking out her card-case, she gave me her own, expressing her hope that they might have the pleasure of seeing me.

Here was a success. I think I must have returned to the hotel on wings—certainly it was not the ordinary walk of mortals which conveyed me; for I found myself seated before my solitary dinner quite oblivious of everything that might have occurred since that parting at the library.

The following afternoon, on wings again, I flew to the temple which enshrined my divinity. Miss Langdale was at home. I had of course inquired for the elder lady. I was conducted up the broad staircase to an elegant drawing-room, its four French windows opening upon a spacious verandah, which pleasantly shaded this luxuriously furnished apartment. A grand-piano and harp testified to the musical tastes of the family. But there was little time for observation, as Miss Langdale entered the room almost immediately. She was very gracious in her welcome; but that could not make up to me for the absence of her charming niece.

'I am sorry,' observed the placid lady, as if stating a very unimportant fact, 'that my niece is not at home; it is the day for her riding-lesson, and unfortunately she has but just gone.'

I could scarcely conceal my bitter disappointment sufficiently to make a conventional reply: 'I was of course fortunate to have found one of the ladies at home in so fine a day, &c.'

There was no difficulty in 'getting on,' as it is called, with Miss Langdale: the inevitable subject

of the weather was disposed of at once; politics occupied almost as short a time; church matters were settled as briefly; in short every conceivable topic was touched upon before I had an opportunity of leading the conversation to the niece.

'I have two nieces under my charge,' said Miss Langdale—'Lillian, whom you have seen; the younger still a child at school; also a nephew, who I assure you is more trouble than both the girls together; but I am happy to say my brother has now sent him abroad with a tutor, so we must hope he will return much improved.' The voluble lady then proceeded to inform me that Mr Langdale had lost his wife when 'Rosa' was born, and that she, the aunt, had resided with the family ever since—a period of ten years. 'So I have had the entire charge of the children, and now look upon them as my own,' she added.

'The niece I have had the pleasure of seeing,' I observed, 'does infinite credit to her training; I think her perfectly charming.'

'I am very glad to hear you say so,' said Miss Langdale; 'it is certainly the general opinion, and I naturally like to think so myself; but it is possible I may be blinded by partiality. To me, Lillian appears guileless as a child with the sense of a woman, a combination which makes her manners very fascinating. But she is really almost too fearless; I never met with a girl with so much self-reliance.'

Longing to hear more, yet not feeling at liberty to ask questions, I merely murmured some commonplace truisms about a 'noble quality.'

'So it is,' replied the sedate aunt, 'when not carried too far; that journey, for instance. I positively shudder when I think of a girl like Lily, brought up as she has been, undertaking it quite alone.'

'With the exception of'—I stammered.

Taking advantage of my hesitation, the talkative lady interrupted, as if to help me to my meaning: 'I beg your pardon, Mr Farquhar. She certainly was fortunate enough to meet with a companion who would, I feel sure, have protected her from any annoyance. But think how different it might have been; and she left home expecting to take care of herself.'

Much vexed at being misunderstood, I was hastening to explain, when the door was thrown open and visitors were announced. I had already exceeded the orthodox limits of a morning call, so I rose to take leave, disappointed, yet consoled by an invitation to call again. 'When I hope,' said my hostess, 'that Lily will be at home.'

I need scarcely say that the invitation was accepted; and I made my next visit at an earlier hour than I had ventured upon at the first, which was necessarily more ceremonious. I was on this occasion shewn into a small, exceedingly pretty morning-room, with glass doors opening into a garden, fragrant with mignonette and gay with autumn flowers. I was standing at these open doors inhaling the perfumed air, when Miss Langdale joined me.

'You are admiring our garden, I see,' said that lady. 'I assure you we are very proud of it; for though other people have recently found out that flowers will flourish at Brighton, my brother has always cultivated his. Being his own, he has spared no pains upon the property. We live here almost

as much as at Kensington; and he comes to us as often as business will permit.'

This information was interesting in its way; but my thoughts were with the fairest flower of them all. A slight rustle of silk behind us made me aware of her presence. I held the tiny gloved hand which was placed so frankly in mine a moment longer than was necessary, while I noticed that she was more elaborately dressed than I had before seen her, her hat being of white felt, with a long fleecy ostrich feather lying upon her burnished hair.

'You are going out, I perceive, Miss Lilian,' I observed, preparing regretfully to take leave; 'pray do not let me detain you.'

'You are not detaining us at all,' she replied, 'for you see my aunt has not even begun to dress; but as we generally take a drive in the afternoon, and not knowing you were here, I thought I might as well be ready for it.'

'We shall be extremely pleased if you will accompany us,' said Miss Langdale, addressing me; 'that is, if it will not bore you.'

Bore me indeed! I was in ecstasies.

'Then, if you will excuse me, I will dress at once.—In the meantime, Lily, you can show Mr Farquhar the garden. I shall not be long.'

Dear, good lady; she might have been all day at her toilet as far as I was concerned; for was I not at last alone with my fairy! Walking up and down the broad gravel walk, we chatted for some time before I found an opportunity of mentioning a subject to which no allusion whatever had been made since the never-to-be-forgotten day of our journey to Brighton.

'I ought to apologise,' I began, 'for not having before asked after our young fellow-traveller. I hope the baby?—'

'Oh, pray do not mention it,' cried my companion, a vivid blush overspreading face and throat. 'I have heard quite enough of that baby, I assure you, already.'

This was startling. But I was destined to be still more perplexed, for she added earnestly: 'Promise me, Mr Farquhar, never to allude to that subject before my aunt, or Papa when he comes; he will be here on Saturday. So promise me, or I shall never hear the last of it.'

'You may trust me, indeed you may. But surely you will not refuse to tell me.'

A velvet dress and feathered bonnet now appeared in view, and Miss Langdale approaching, told us that the carriage was at the door. We had a perfectly lovely drive, not dawdling up and down the Parade, but far away over the fresh breezy downs; and when it was over I returned to my rooms a bewitched and bewildered man.

The following Saturday I was introduced to Mr Langdale. He was very cordial, and immediately asked me to dinner. I found him a capital host; and I think we were mutually pleased with the acquaintance.

From that time I was a frequent visitor at the house, and the more I saw of Lily the more passionately I loved her. But for that one forbidden subject, I should have been supremely happy, for I could see that she liked my society; and when her lovely eyes met mine with the open truthful expression which was their characteristic, I could scarcely believe that she had a secret in

the world. Sometimes I forgot it altogether; sometimes it haunted me even in the happiest moments of our intercourse, when, as I relapsed into reverie, she would innocently ask why I was 'so absent.'

I hope I shall not therefore be thought guilty of impertinent curiosity when I confess that I became intensely anxious to solve this provoking mystery. It was not easy to do so; as though almost daily now in Lily's society, I was never alone with her, and I was bound by my promise in the presence of others. The wished-for opportunity, however, occurred at last. It was Saturday, and Mr Langdale was as usual expected by an afternoon train. It was the custom for Miss Langdale and Lily to take the carriage to meet him at the station, and it was at the door when I happened to pass the house. The ladies came out at the same moment. I was about to assist them into the carriage, when Miss Langdale, who looked very ill, said: 'I am afraid, my dear, I am not well enough to go with you; I would rather lie down. With this headache the glare is insupportable.'

'I told you so, dear aunt,' replied Lily. 'We need not go; the carriage can be sent for Papa without us.'

But Miss Langdale would not hear of Lily giving up her drive and also disappointing Papa; so after many affectionate remonstrances, Miss Lily was obliged to depart. Just as the footman was closing the carriage-door, Miss Langdale said: 'Will you go with her, Mr Farquhar? We know,' she added smiling, 'by experience that you can take care of her.'

Overjoyed, I sprang into the vacant seat beside Lily, who as we drove off exclaimed: 'What a careful old darling aunt is! She seems to think I am never to be trusted alone; and is more particular than ever since—since,' she added, slightly hesitating, 'that unlucky journey.'

'Will you trust me, Lily?' I asked, for the first time addressing her by that familiar name. 'Will you trust me, and grant me a favour?'

'Certainly, I will, if possible,' she replied. 'What do you wish me to do?'

'I wish you to tell me why that journey from London was unlucky, and—about—the baby.'

'Do you really care to know?' she asked, apparently quite amused.

'I care for everything which concerns you, Lily,' I replied very seriously.

'Then I suppose I must tell you,' said she with a sigh, the glowing colour mantling over her fair young face. 'But I must say it is rather hard to have to proclaim one's own folly, at the risk too of—'

'Of what?' I asked anxiously.

'Well, I was going to say, of forfeiting your good opinion; but I daresay you think me frivolous as it is.'

'I think, Miss Lilian,' I replied, now greatly excited, 'that you are amusing yourself at my expense.'

Startled by my sudden change of manner, she gazed at me in evident amazement, then said: 'What can you mean, Mr Farquhar? I am only surprised that you should feel any curiosity on the subject; I thought men were never curious.'

'Then I am an exception,' I exclaimed. 'How can I help being interested in all that concerns

you? So pray, fulfil your promise at once, as we ought to be at the station in a few minutes.'

'Oh, there is not much to tell,' she quietly observed. 'But if I am to constitute you my father-confessor, I must tell you *all*, that you may understand the motives which actuated my conduct.'

'Yes, yes,' I muttered; 'as you please; only, pray, pray go on.'

'Then,' said Lily composedly, 'I must begin with the day you and I travelled together from London. Papa was to have accompanied me, my aunt and the servants having gone the day before; but unexpected business came in the way, and when he came in to luncheon, he told me that he could not possibly go to Brighton till the following week, and asked me if I could also remain in town. I told him it was impossible; the house was dismantled, my clothes sent away, and I was actually dressed for the journey. Papa saw how awkward it was for me; and when I represented to him that I should be little more than an hour alone in the train if I went, while I should be all day by myself in the great empty house if I remained at home, he somewhat reluctantly gave his consent to my going without him. He then desired my brother to take me to the station, and see me safe into a carriage, gave me a book to read, which he said would prevent any one talking to me, and wished me good-bye; and with many injunctions to "take great care of myself," he left me with Harry, who grumbled very much at being detained on my account, as he was also going from home, and had promised to meet some friends who would be waiting for him. I had Papa's permission, however, and was determined to go. Then Harry told me that I should not be allowed to have my dog with me, that it would be put into a dark place, where it would be sure to howl all the way. This was almost too much for me; and I was on the point of giving way to Harry's persuasion, and wait for the escort of Papa, who would be sure to prevent that, as he is known to all the officials on the Brighton line, when a sudden thought struck me. I flew up-stairs to Rosa's room, took her doll, which is as big as a baby, out of its box, and quickly taking off its long robes, I dressed poor little dear struggling Sprite in them.'

'Lily, Lily!' I exclaimed, almost too vexed with myself to laugh at this absurd solution of the mystery. 'Why did you not tell me this before?'

'I did not know you would care about such a trifle, for one thing,' she replied; 'and really aunt was so angry with me at the time that I did not wish to renew the subject in her presence; so you see this has been the first opportunity I have had for telling you; and now I suppose you will think me as foolish as aunt did—worse than childish, she said.'

'Shall I tell you what I think, Lily?' I asked.

'Yes,' she said, laughing; 'I should like to know the worst.'

'I think then that you are much too charming to travel alone, and that I should like to take care of you always. Tell me, my darling, if I may hope to do so?'

'Always?' she asked wonderingly, as if scarcely understanding me.

'Yes, Lily, as your devoted and adoring husband.'

At this moment the carriage drove into the station, and stopped at the usual place of meeting. We were not too soon, for the train had just arrived, and Lily's quick eyes caught sight of her father coming towards us. 'There's Papa!' she exclaimed, starting up in the carriage. I took her hand, and gently drawing her back to her seat, I implored her to answer me.

Her lovely face was flushed, the ready tears trembled on the long lashes which veiled her eyes; she hesitated for a moment, then in two words made me happy. 'Ask Papa,' she whispered.

I could only thank her by a silent pressure of her tiny hand, as 'Papa' at that moment joined us, and neither of us was sufficiently composed to explain the reason of my presence.

Lily and I quite understood each other; and I was able to satisfy Mr Langdale as to my position and prospects; but he would only consent to an engagement on condition that our marriage should not take place till his daughter was of age. I pleaded that it would be quite impossible for me to bear the delay of so many years.

'How odd,' he inquired, 'do you imagine the child to be?'

'Certainly not more than seventeen.'

'Then let me tell you for your comfort that Lily has reached the mature age of nineteen and a half,' replied her father.

I was equally surprised and pleased, for it made the disparity between us so much less than I thought, as well as the proposed time of probation.

It was a favourite joke of Mr Langdale's that it was my darling's childish trick with the little dog, and not her appearance, which had given me an erroneous opinion of her age. Miss Langdale always pretended to agree with her brother. That good lady highly approved of our engagement, declaring that she had taken a fancy to me from the first. This was not exactly true, but no doubt she thought it was when she said it.

One evening when we were talking over the memorable journey, it occurred to me to ask Lily why she had travelled second-class on that occasion, her ticket being for the first.

'Hush!' she whispered, placing her little hand upon my lips. 'Aunt does not yet know of that flagrant impropriety; but I assure you I had a good reason.'

She told me afterwards that her brother was so charmed with 'the lark,' as he called it, that he quite forgot his ill-humour, and tried to assist her to carry out her plan in every possible way; he had taken her ticket and selected a carriage, when it occurred to him that she would look more like a nursemaid in the second-class; to which she agreed. Lily a nursemaid! Did my darling expect to travel only with the blind?

On the twenty-first anniversary of her birthday, our marriage took place at Brighton, where the first happy days of our courtship were passed. Rosa, a pretty little girl quite as tall as her sister, was the chief brides-maid, looking scarcely younger than the bride, who is now the beloved mistress of a large establishment. My mother, who resides with us, never interferes with my clever little wife, whom she loves as a daughter;

and as for me, I believe—well, I am sure that I am the most obedient as well as the most devoted of her servants.

THE PROPER THING.

FOREMOST in the ranks of despots of our own creating may be mentioned that allegorical personage Mrs Grundy, who though an unseen power, seems to be armed with all the force and subtlety of a dreaded tyrant. Her kindred partake of the same nature. Some are recognised facts, and known by special names; others are nameless, and perhaps not even supposed to exist; but all are powerful, and all are to be dreaded.

Ancient as Mrs Grundy—generally living side by side with her amongst civilised races—is that great uncompromising tyrant called the Proper Thing; though among barbarous tribes, neither Mrs Grundy nor the Proper Thing is to be found, because both spring from the corruption of a refined instinct—the instinct of order and decorum. Races semi-civilised and over-civilised—terms which mean nearly the same thing—are most subject to the capricious influences of this tyrant. But wherever the slightest improvement has been made on complete savagery, there the gall-nut has appeared upon it, so that a few wild Bush-tribes seem to be the only portions of the human family over whom the Proper Thing has not more or less extended sceptre.

The forms assumed by the Proper Thing in various regions are of infinite variety, and sometimes even more startling than ludicrous. In certain of the South Sea Islands, for instance, it is the Proper Thing for children to kill their parents when verging on old age; and the parents are quite agreeable to the practice, which derives its power from religious belief, as the tyrant's dictates often do in heathen countries. In China the Proper Thing has been a terrible autocrat. There, women's feet have been reduced to the shape and size of a nutmeg, and mandarins' nails lengthened to a proportionate enormity—all out of deference to the Proper Thing, which to them means being idle and known to be idle. There, awe of the imperial presence has made it indispensable to 'nine times knock the noddle;' and we know how a representative of our own country was justly applauded in England for refusing to perform that ceremony, or conform to the exigencies of the Proper Thing as by law established in China. It stalks across the lone expanses of the North American prairies, inspiring men to let their hair grow to the ground and make pompous speeches; while it lays heavy weights on women's shoulders and crops their locks, and in some places flattens children's heads in their cradles. East and west, in the past and in the present, its legislation is always seen taking the most contradictory forms, but almost equally inconvenient in all. Thus in ancient Mexico it decreed that the nobility should go to court in their shabbiest dresses, because no one might dare to be smart in the presence of the Emperor; and in modern Europe it decrees that ladies shall impoverish themselves rather than not go to court in a blaze of splendour. In this

instance, however, there is no question as to which decree is the most convenient.

The capriciousness of this power is its most objectionable characteristic, since its rule would be highly beneficent if it only attacked bad manners and customs, which on the contrary it very often overlooks. In Germany, for example, people with the longest prefaces to their names, the addresses on whose envelopes are a perfect volume of titles, are allowed to pass their knives and forks with alarming celerity in front of their neighbours at dinner, in order to plunge them into some distant coveted dish. No doubt their appetites are more enormous than ours, for in the matter of capacity for food, beyond the widest width there always seems to be a wider still; but the exigencies of the Proper Thing ought at least to make them wait until the dishes are handed to them in civilised form, or even do without the object of their desire rather than risk cutting off their neighbours' noses. But it really seems that the more stringent the rule of the Proper Thing, the more latitude is given to disagreeable manners. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for example, it was much more of an autocrat even than it is now; and yet with all the flattery, the bowing and scraping and long titles, no one put any constraint on his temper, and the best bred people thought nothing of throwing things at each other's heads when they were in a passion. Occurrences of this sort are rare now, at least in high-class and diplomatic society.

But still the rule of the Proper Thing is rather severe on all classes even here at home, nor do any of our liberties and charters interfere with its prerogatives. We may question them nevertheless. Of course we do not mean to question regulations made for the comfort and decency and order of society, such as the hostess sitting at the head of the table, the eating of fish with a silver knife, or even a duchess taking precedence of a marchioness. All these regulations and others of the same kind relate to good manners, which are often quite independent of the Proper Thing; and without a little code of niceties we should soon sink to the lowest depths of animalism. But why should it be improper for a lady to ride alone, whereas a similar fiat has not gone forth against her walking alone in country roads and lanes, though she must be much safer from molestation on horseback than on foot? Why must invited guests to an evening party always be after their time? Why is it necessary to dine at late unwholesome hours, to dance all night, and to go to several parties in one evening? But these are really only the more harmless pranks of the chief ruler. Unfortunately, there are others which interfere tyrannically with the serious business of life.

The Proper Thing has always taken up its stronghold very specially in the institution of Caste, where for unnumbered centuries it has reigned over India with a despotism harsher than that of the native princes. Nor has it by any means confined its caste regulations to Eastern lands. Far be it from us to make hostile reflections on the venerable institution of distinction of classes in our own country; on the contrary, we might rather lament the confusion into which this institution has fallen among us. But none the less we may question the extraordinary laws which govern what is still called 'loss of caste.' Why should a lady

lose hers because she earns her bread as a governess, while a gentleman does not lose his through being a tutor? Of course she can recover her caste, if only she has a fortune left her; it is not like Indian caste, once lost for ever lost; but in the majority of cases this does not happen. And why, when wholesome caste laws are thrown to the winds, should an absurd and unjust one like this hold its ground? But after all, it is perhaps natural to the spirit and genius of the Proper Thing, which has always been harsher with women than with men, according to the principles on which human affairs have generally been conducted. However, tyranny of this sort is by no means confined to the upper and middle classes even as regards caste. In this matter the lower ranks, and especially their female half, are very much its slaves. In these, though the women do not therefore hold themselves bound to speak in a low voice, or to cultivate the good quality which is next to godliness, or to refrain from repairing at all costs to crowded and not always very sober scenes of holiday-making, they are fully alive to the necessity of flaunting every new fashion in the public eye on Sunday through a medium of tawdry tint and dimmy material; children wearing a *tablier* or *pavioir* of totally different material and antagonistic colour to the frock which it was intended to adorn; women with hideous complications of blue feathers and real roses on their heads. Lately, indeed, since ladies have set the good example of wearing the dark colours which become nearly every one, it has been much followed by their imitators below-stairs, though we fear more for the sakes of the example than the goodness of it.

Another and still stranger phase is to be found in some of our small sea-side ports and fishing-villages, where it is considered a disgrace to girls to go into service, though it is not derogatory to their dignity to assume male attire and pick cockles all day on a mud-bank. The men are held to have formed a *métalliance* if they marry gentlemen's servants; a falling-off which, if their wives die, they may retrieve by a second marriage with a lady who (emphatically) 'has never been in service.' But no doubt it is natural enough that the people should copy their superiors' worship of the Proper Thing in this as in the other fashions, though they have different notions of what the Proper Thing really is.

We hope to have established the fact that this tyrant has nothing to do with virtue. Its rule has often flourished most where virtue has been at the lowest ebb. How brilliantly, for example, the Proper Thing reigned in the court of Louis XIV., which was certainly not a school of morality. Neither has it been to do with what may be justly called *les convenances*; we mean those smaller constraints and proprieties which young American ladies set aside without any deterioration of their real goodness, but with a certain detriment to their manners and maidenly charms. Originally, no doubt, the Proper Thing sprang from a sense of true propriety, but it has degenerated so far as sometimes even to contradict that sense; and virtue can stand all the better without such a whimsical attempt at a buttress. Of course it will always set itself up more or less as a buttress, and as necessary to virtue and propriety, unless the real things should make such progress as to

crowd out the counterfeit. But we fear that there never will be a civilisation so pure and simple that delicacy and honour will, of their own goodness, take the place of the true Proper Thing.

INSTANCES OF LONGEVITY.

We had been putting to rights an old surgery that it might be turned into a dwelling-house. A complete set of drawers, with names of drugs and medical condiments printed thereon, had been torn from the wall; vast heaps of bones, used formerly for scientific purposes, had been taken from a large mouldy cupboard, and had thereafter received Christian burial in a corner of our garden. All had been done that was possible to sweeten and purify the ancient place, when we discovered on a certain shelf several dusty and stained volumes, which looked to our eyes interesting and curious. One of the volumes, entitled *Health and Longevity*, was secured at once by my young children, and some extraordinary woodcuts of venerable individuals, more or less hideous, were cut therefrom, the volume itself being then thrown aside. Some notes regarding these ancient beings may not be uninteresting.

The first, whose portrait lies before me as I write, is named 'Isobel Walker, who lived in the parish of Daviot, Aberdeenshire, and died 2d November 1774, aged one hundred and twelve years.' The period of her birth was established beyond doubt by the records of the parish of Rayne, in Garioch, where she was born. Nothing remarkable is known regarding her mode of life, excepting that she is said to have had 'a placid temper, and to have been in that medium state in regard to lazziness and complacency which is favourable to long life.' She is represented on the plate as a plump-faced, cheerful woman, with no perceptible neck, and with an intelligent expression of countenance.

The next individual whose somewhat stolid countenance lies before me in one of the quaint wood-engravings, is called 'Peter Garden, who lived also in Aberdeenshire, in the parish of Auchterless, and who died on the 12th January 1775, aged one hundred and thirty-one years.' He was above the average height, led a temperate and frugal life; was employed in agricultural pursuits to the last, and preserved his looks so well that he appeared to be a fresher and younger man than his son, who was far advanced in life. There have, the record goes on to say, 'been several other people in Scotland than either Isobel Walker or Peter Garden, but unfortunately no picture or engraving of them can now be found.' Among these was John Taylor, a minor at the Leadhills, who worked at that employment till he was one hundred and twelve! He did not marry till he was sixty, after which there were nine children born to him. 'He saw to the last without spectacles, had excellent teeth, and enjoyed his existence till 1770, when he yielded to fate, at the age of one hundred and thirty-two.'

The fourth venerable and antique person mentioned is 'Catharine, Countess of Desmond, who died at the age of one hundred and forty years, in the reign of King James I. She was a daughter

of the Fitzgeralds of Dromana in the county of Waterford, and in the reign of Edward IV., married James, fourteenth Earl of Desmond. She was in England in that reign, and danced at court with Richard, Duke of Gloucester. It appears that she retained her full vigour to an advanced period of life; and the ruin of the House of Desmond obliged her to take a journey from Bristol to London, to solicit relief from the court, when she was nearly one hundred and forty. She twice or thrice renewed her teeth, and is represented with a heavy and voluminous head-dress, and a most stern and masculine cast of features.

So much for Scotland and Ireland. Our fifth wood-cut, much defaced and time-worn, is a portraiture of 'Thomas Parr, son of John Parr of Winnington, in the parish of Alderbury in Shropshire, who was born in 1483, in the reign of Edward IV., and resided in the Strand, London, in 1635; consequently was one hundred and fifty-two years and some odd months. He lived in the reigns of ten kings and queens, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.' When he was about one hundred and fifty-two years of age, he was brought up to London by Thomas, Earl of Arundel, and carried to court. The king said to him: 'You have lived longer than other men. What have you done more than other men?' He replied: 'I did penance when I was a hundred years old.' His great rules for longevity are well known: 'Keep your head cool by temperance; your feet warm by exercise; rise early; go soon to bed; and if you are inclined to get fat, keep your eyes open and your mouth shut.' Or in other words: 'Be moderate both in your sleep and diet.'

Henry Jenkins is the next person on our list. His birthplace is unknown; 'but there is satisfactory evidence of his great longevity.' At the age of between ten and twelve he was sent to Northallerton with a horse-load of arrows, 'previous to the battle of Flodden, which was fought on the 9th of September 1513; and as he died on the 8th December 1670, he must have then been one hundred and sixty-nine years of age.' He had been often sworn in Chancery and in other courts to above one hundred and forty years' memory; and there is a record preserved in the King's Remembrancer's office in the Exchequer, by which it appears 'that Henry Jenkins of Ellerton-upon-Swale, labourer, aged one hundred and fifty-seven, was produced and deposed as a witness.' Little is known of his mode of living except that towards the close of his life he 'swam rivers.' His diet is said to have been 'coarse and sour.' He is represented with a long white beard, a shovel-hat, and a pensive expression of face—not unpleasing.

Our next plate represents two very disagreeable-looking Hungarian specimens of humanity, named 'Sarah Roffin or Rovin, and John Rovin, man and wife.' They are depicted as enjoying the sweets of domestic life. John Rovin is entering the hovel in which they live, with a long staff in his hand, a bundle of some kind on his back. Sarah is aged one hundred and sixty-four; her husband is one hundred and seventy-two! In these circumstances, the expression of utter disgust and weariness to be seen on both faces is scarcely to be wondered at. They had at the time their likenesses were taken 'lived together one hundred and forty-seven years, and were both born at Stadova in the directory Casanseber in Temeswaer Danat; their

children, two sons and two daughters, being then alive. The youngest son is one hundred and sixteen years of age, and he has two great-grandsons, the one in the twenty-seventh, the other in the thirty-fifth year of his age.' A description of the picture from which this engraving is taken has been given in the following terms: 'The dress of John Rovin consists of a white frock reaching almost to the knees, and confined round the waist by a girdle made of rushes, in which is hung a knife. He is standing supported by a stick; his knees are rather bent; in his left hand are some heads of Indian corn, which he is presenting to his wife. His hair and beard are a light gray; his eyes are quick, clear, and penetrating; and though his whole aspect proclaims his life to have been a long one, there are no such traces of old age in him as appear in his wife. She stoops very much, is wrinkled, old, and yellow, and in her whole aspect is displayed extreme old age in its most revolting form. Near her feet and on the ground is seated a large handsome tortoiseshell cat, which also appears very old.'

The last of this extraordinary batch of aged people is called Petratsch Zortan or Czartan, aged one hundred and eighty-five; and like the preceding pair, is Hungarian. In a Dutch dictionary entitled *Het algemeen Historisch Woordenboek*, there is an account given of this ancient personage, of which the following is a translation: 'Czartan was born in 1537 at Kosfrock, a village four miles from Temeswaer, in Hungary, where he had lived one hundred and eighty years. When the Turks took Temeswaer from the Christians, he kept his father's cattle. A few days before his death he walked with the help of his stick to the post-house of Kosfrock, to ask alms of the travellers. He had but little eyesight; his hair and beard were of a greenish-white colour; he had few teeth remaining. His son was ninety-seven years of age—by his third wife. Being a Greek, the old man was a strict observer of fasts, and never used any food but milk and cakes, called by the Hungarians "Kollatschen," together with a good glass of brandy. He had descendants in the fifth generation, with whom he sometimes played, carrying them in his arms. He died in 1724. Count Wallis had a portrait taken of this old man, when he fell in with him previous to his death. The Dutch envoy then at Vienna transmitted this account to the States-general.'

DREAMLAND—A SONNET.

At night, when all is hushed in still repose,
When 'Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep,'
Doth o'er our wearied frame soft vigil keep,
And with her gentle hand our eyelids close,
Then doth the restless spirit take its flight,
While soft imagination lends her wings,
And the chained watchdog Will no longer springs
To bar its progress through the realms of Night.
Reason, the watchful porter at the gate,
Tired with the constant labours of the day,
Retires to rest, and leaves it free to stray
Into the land where Faery keeps her state,
And her attendant fays glad homage shew
To mortal visitants from earth below.

CATHARINE DAVIDSON.

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LEVI COFFIN.

THE Coffyns or Coffins are a Devonshire family, said to have been founded by one of the followers of the Conqueror. In 1642 Tristram Coffyn, a son of this old house, sailed from Plymouth for New England, taking with him his wife and five children, his mother and two sisters. He settled at Salisbury, in the colony of Massachusetts, and his descendants are now to be found in many of the States. Several of them have won themselves a name of note in the service of their country; but none has a higher claim to the remembrance, not only of their fellow-citizens but of all who honour worth wherever it is to be found, than Levi Coffin, whose memoirs lie before us under the title of *Reminiscences of Levi Coffin, the Reputed President of the Underground Railroad, being a brief History of the Labours of a Lifetime on behalf of the Slave* (London: Sampson Low, 1876). His tale, told in plain homely language, is a stirring one, and shews us a phase of American life which is happily a thing of the past; for now that slavery is abolished there is no longer any need for the devoted labours of the true-hearted men who by means of the once famous 'Underground Railroad' helped the fugitive slave on his way to the land of freedom—over the Canadian border and into British territory, where, and where only, he was safe from kidnappers and hunters.

Levi Coffin was born in 1798. His father was a member of a colony of the Society of Friends, settled at New Garden in North Carolina; and he himself has always belonged to that religious profession. One day when he was about seven years old he was standing beside his father, who was chopping up some wood at a little distance from the house. Along the road came a coffin or gang of slaves, chained in couples on each side of a long chain which extended between them. At some distance behind came the slave-dealer with a wagon-load of supplies. Levi's father spoke pleasantly to the slaves. 'Well boys,' he said, 'why do they chain you?' One of them replied for the rest: 'They have taken us away from our wives

and children, and they chain us lest we should make our escape and go back to them.' The gang tramped off along the dusty road; and in answer to the child's eager questions, his father told him what slavery was; and little Levi endeavoured to realise the troubles of the poor men he had just seen, by thinking—'How terribly we should feel if father were taken away from us!'

This was the first outbreak of a feeling which influenced his whole life. He began his work early. At fifteen years of age he was the means of enabling a slave—who had been kidnapped near Baltimore and brought into North Carolina—to escape from the slave-dealer's gang. He was also often of service to runaway slaves, who used to conceal themselves in the daytime in the woods and thickets near his father's house at New Garden, by going out to them with a small store of provisions, which he distributed to those he found there.

In 1826 Levi Coffin removed to Newport, Indiana, where he took a shop and began business. He was soon a prosperous man; and ten years after he was able to set up a large oil-factory. His place in Newport soon became one of the 'stations' of the Underground Railroad. This was a secret organisation for facilitating the escape of slaves from the Southern States to Canada. It was neither planned nor organised by any one man; it had grown up gradually, to supply a want felt by the Abolitionist party. A slave escaped from a plantation would without it have no means of travelling rapidly, of obtaining relief, or of finding friends to conceal him, and his hope of safety would depend only upon a series of lucky chances and accidents. Gradually, however, along the routes by which the slaves usually escaped certain houses came to be known as those to which the fugitives could safely apply for assistance. These routes were in the secret language of the U. G. R. R. (Underground Railroad) known as lines, and the houses were called 'stations.' In course of time the lines were so well organised that in every town along the route there was a director who had at his command a number of

hiding-places for slaves, funds collected for their relief, wagons for passing them on by night to the next station, and means of acquiring information as to any pursuit that might be attempted.

'I kept,' says Levi Coffin, 'a team and wagon always at command, to convey the fugitive slaves on their journey. These journeys had to be made at night, often through deep and bad roads, and along by-ways that were seldom travelled. Every precaution to evade pursuit had to be used, as the hunters were often on the track, and sometimes ahead of the slaves. We had different routes for sending the slaves to depôts ten, fifteen, or twenty miles distant; and when we heard of slave-hunters having passed on one road, we forwarded our passengers by another. Sometimes we learned that the pursuers were ahead of them; and we sent a messenger and had the fugitives brought back to my house, to lie in concealment till they had lost the trail. . . . Three principal lines from the south converged at my house—one from Cincinnati, one from Madison, and one from Jeffersonville, Indiana. There was no lack of passengers. Seldom a week passed without our receiving them. We knew not what night or what hour of the night we would be roused from slumber by a gentle rap at the door; that was the signal announcing the arrival of a train of the U. G. R. R. I have often been awaked by this signal, and sprung out of bed in the dark and opened the door. Outside in the cold or rain there would be a two-horse wagon loaded with fugitives, perhaps the greater part of them women and children. When they were all safely inside and the door fastened, I would cover the windows, strike a light, and build a good fire. By this time my wife would be up and preparing victuals for them; and in a short time the cold and hungry fugitives would be made comfortable. I would accompany the conductor of the train' [that is, the driver of the wagon; in America the guard of a railway train is always called the conductor] 'to the stable, and care for the horses, that had perhaps been driven twenty-five or thirty miles that night through the cold and rain. The fugitives would rest on pallets before the fire the rest of the night. The companies varied in number from two or three to seventeen fugitives.'

Such was the work which for twenty years this good man carried on in Newport. He had often to set his wits hard at work to foil the slave-hunters, and more than once ran serious personal risk. The whole undertaking must have cost him a heavy expenditure of time, labour, and money. But he was not content with this. He organised in Newport a store where cotton goods were sold that had been manufactured entirely by free labour; and for this purpose took a journey to the South to establish relations with planters who employed only freemen. He and his friends then formed a league, each member of which bound himself to purchase no goods on the production of which slaves had been employed.

In 1847 he removed to Cincinnati, and took charge of one of the most important points in the system of the U. G. R. R. Cincinnati is built on the northern bank of the Ohio River, and thus stood on the very frontier of the slave-land, the opposite shore belonging to the slave state of Kentucky. Here his work went on for about

fifteen years, till the war put an end to slavery in the United States. He tells in his *Reminiscences* many a stirring story of the escape of fugitives that he passed on to Canada. For these we must refer our readers to the book itself. He was so active, enterprising, and successful that he received the name of 'President of the Underground Railroad.' Everywhere he had the fullest confidence reposed in him by the coloured people; and often those who had escaped to Canada would send him their savings, to be employed in buying their relatives and friends out of captivity in the South by a fair bargain with the planters. It may be safely said that his whole life was passed in the cause of promoting the freedom of the slave; and he always found willing helpers and allies, mostly men of his own religious persuasion. He always confined his operations to concealing the slaves that came or were brought to him, and helping them upon their way to Canada or to some free state. He would never actually lure a slave from a plantation; and he condemned any active or forcible resistance to the law, even when it was exercised upon the side of slavery.

A man of quite a different stamp was John Fairfield, another agent of the Underground Railroad, but whom Levi Coffin with his Quaker peace principles could never forgive for making the revolver an auxiliary in his work. 'With all his faults,' he says, 'and misguided impulses and wicked ways, Fairfield was a brave man; he never betrayed a trust that was reposed in him, and he was a true friend to the oppressed and suffering slave.' Fairfield was a Virginian; and his earliest exploit had been to run away to Canada from his uncle's plantation taking one of the slaves with him. From that time till he died he passed an adventurous life, visiting once or twice in the year Virginia or Kentucky, establishing relations with the slaves upon a plantation, and then leading them to Canada. He was soon known to many of the refugees settled there, and they would ask him to bring them their relatives from the Southern plantations, sometimes offering him money they had saved as payment for his exertions.

'Fairfield,' says Levi Coffin, 'was a young man without family, and was fond of adventure and excitement. He wanted employment, and agreed to take the money offered by the fugitives and engage in the undertaking. He obtained the names of masters and slaves, and an exact knowledge of the different localities to be visited, then acted as his shrewd judgment dictated under different circumstances. He would go South, into the neighbourhood where the slaves were whom he intended to conduct away, and under an assumed name and a false pretence of business, would board perhaps at the house of the master whose stock of valuable property he intended to decrease. He would proclaim himself to be a Virginian, and profess to be strongly pro-slavery in his sentiments, thus lulling the suspicions of the slaveholders, while he established a secret understanding with the slaves, gaining their confidence, and making arrangements for their escape. Then he would suddenly disappear from the neighbourhood, and several slaves would be missing at the same time. Fairfield was always ready to take money for his services from the slaves if they had it to offer; but if they had not he helped them all the same. He was equally ready to spend it

in the same cause, and if necessary would part with his last dollar to effect his object.'

Often he would bring a negro or two with him, who would act as his slaves, and whom he would pretend to treat very roughly. These would act as his intermediaries with the men he hoped to rescue. On one occasion he rescued a large number of men from the salt-works on the Kanawha River in Virginia. He assumed the character of a salt-dealer, and had two large boats built on the river for his business. When the boats were finished, a crowd of negroes escaped in them down the river towards the Ohio. As soon as the alarm was given, he pretended to be very anxious to aid in recapturing his boats and the escaped slaves. He rode off at the head of the pursuers, directed the chase, and when they found the abandoned boats on the riverbank, he suggested that they should search in various directions, and meet in a few hours to report if they had got any traces of the fugitives. He never appeared at the rendezvous; he had joined the slaves at a previously appointed spot, and was conducting them to one of the stations on the Underground Railroad en route for Canada. He generally marched at night, and rested in concealment in the daytime.

Often on these journeys he had to fight his way through patrols of slave-hunters. One moonlight night he had a narrow escape. The patrollers had found his track, and gathered a body of armed men, and lay in ambush, waiting for him at both ends of a bridge which his party of fugitives had to cross. Fairfield always armed his men with revolvers, and told them that he would shoot down any one who would not fight for his freedom. On this occasion he was taken by surprise. As the party gained the centre of the bridge they were fired upon from both ends of it. 'They thought, no doubt,' said Fairfield, 'that this sudden attack would intimidate us, and that we would surrender; but in this they were mistaken. I ordered my men to charge to the front, and they did charge. We fired as we went, and the men in ambush scattered and ran like scared sheep.' Fairfield's clothes were torn by balls, and he and one of his party were slightly wounded. Levi reproved him for trying to kill any one, and told him that we should love our enemies. Fairfield's reply was characteristic. 'Love our enemies, indeed! I do not intend to hurt people if they keep out of the way; but if they step in between me and liberty they must take the consequences.' Levi naively adds: 'I saw it was useless to preach peace principles to Fairfield.' Such a man could only have one end. There is reason to believe that shortly before the outbreak of the war in 1861 he was detected arming the negroes in Texas, and was hanged by a Southern mob. He had been twelve years engaged in his daring work among the plantations.

The abolition of slavery by the war did not put an end to Levi Coffin's labours for the negroes; it only gave them another form. It became necessary to provide for the thousands to whom a sweeping measure of emancipation had given their freedom and nothing more, in many cases casting them adrift upon the world without any resource, for at the end of the war trade was bad and employment scarce. Relief societies for the freedmen were formed throughout the States. Levi Coffin took a leading part in this work; and when it was decided

to send a delegate to ask for aid from England, he was chosen for this important post. In the summer of 1864 he arrived in London with credentials and introductions to various public men. At his first meeting held in London for the freedmen he was supported by Messrs John Bright, W. E. Forster, Samuel Gurney, and other members of parliament. A second meeting followed at Mr Gurney's house. Levi Coffin notes with satisfaction that 'it was quite aristocratic in character, being largely composed of lords, dukes, bishops, and members of parliament.' A London Freedmen's Aid Society was organised with several prominent men upon its committee. Branches were established and meetings held throughout England and Ireland. Levi Coffin spoke at all these meetings. Perhaps many of our readers will remember having heard him.

Having finished his work in England, he went over to France and continued it there; and when, after having been more than twelve months in Europe, he returned to Cincinnati in 1865, he had the satisfaction of knowing that his journey had borne rich fruit for the freedmen. He paid another visit to Europe in 1867 as a delegate to an Anti-slavery Congress in Paris. With the account of this journey his book of interesting *Reminiscences* concludes. We heartily recommend it to our readers. If nothing else, it shows how much one earnest man can accomplish in a lifetime for a cause that he has thoroughly at heart.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XXIX.—FOUND.

By some seeming irony of Fate, it is when our fortunes have ebbed to their lowest, and all seems cold, bleak, and dreary in the threatening horizon before us, that light begins to break in upon the oppressive darkness. That we are never so likely to fall as when we deem ourselves to stand in boastful security, proud of our seeming strength, is a truth which the historical student will not be slow to recognise. Down comes the thunderbolt from a clear sky, toppling over to shameful ruin the gilded image propped on feet of sorry clay. But there is a substratum of fact whereon is reared the homely proverb which declares that when things are at the worst they will mend.

For all that, we cannot wrap ourselves in a comfortable mantle of indolent fatalism, assured that our shortcomings will be compensated by some extraordinary turn of Fortune's wheel. It so happens that we are often too dull of vision to know the heavenly messenger when we see him. Our deaf ears fail to catch the strain of hope. We miss the tide that offered to bear our agony to port. The grass grows, but the steel, all unwitting of the green meadow hard by, starves within a stone's throw of plenty. Chatterton was not the only one who, goaded by despair, has taken the leap in the dark at the very moment when kind hands were held out to lead the truant into the goodly fellowship of honest men. A great hush and stillness had fallen upon those who were shut up in the Hunger Hole. There was that in the situation which forbade useless words. It was getting late. There was every probability of spending the night and the morrow in that dismal place. That amount of imprisonment entailed

cold and misery, perhaps an attack of marsh-fever, since the air from Bitternley Swamp was likely to be fraught with the seeds of ague. But twenty-four hours—thirty-six hours—might not see the end of the captivity of Ethel and Lady Alice, and in that case—

How strange that any one should run the risk of being starved to death, in this blatant nineteenth century of ours, when road and rail, gas and press, have opened up so many an old-world nook, and dragged so many an abuse into the killing light of day. Yet Dartmoor remains Dartmoor, and it is quite possible to be smothered in its snows, sunk in its swamps, or to wander among its blinding mists until the deadly chill of fatigue benumbs the wearied limbs, for there are wildernesses yet where Nature is more than a match for man.

The fickle beauty of the day had not lasted. Clouds went driving by; that much could be distinguished by gazing up through the narrow space which weeds and leaves left free. And presently it began to rain, and the moaning wind grew shrill, and rushed with strange and mournful dissonance through the recesses of the cavern. 'It is all my fault—mine!' sobbed Lady Alice, nestling at Ethel's side. 'I would not say a word, before starting, about the Hunger Hole, for fear the elders should object; and now I am caught in my own trap. It's very hard on you though, Miss Gray.'

Ethel bore up bravely, but she was far from feeling the calm that she affected. Perhaps Lady Alice was too positive in her conviction of the hopelessness of their condition; but if the attention of the seekers was diverted into false channels, who could tell what might result before a happy accident should bring aid? It was for her pupil that she feared, not for herself. In the event of long detention in that wretched place, a large-eyed, excitable slip of a girl, of high spirit but delicate temperament, could scarcely be expected to endure hardships which Ethel, in the bloom of perfect health, might be able to support. It was growing late, and perceptibly colder. Night would be upon them soon, and then—

And then the morrow would dawn laggingly, and hope would leap up a little at the sight of welcome daylight, and flag and droop as the hours went by and relief came not. That Lady Alice could live through a second night in that chill atmosphere of the cave, and without sustenance, Ethel did not believe.

'How cold it strikes!' said the young girl almost peevishly, as she shivered and pressed closer to Ethel. 'I am afraid though,' she added, more gently after a while, 'that we shall be colder yet before the end of this.'

As the moaning wind swept by, and the patter of the rain that lashed the outer walls of the grotto grew louder, Ethel listened, with a sense of hearing which her anxiety had sharpened, for any sound that might indicate that help was near. But no! There was nothing to be distinguished save the beating of the rain, the mournful cadence of the wind, and the dull regular drip of the water that trickled from the spring, and fell deep down, to the hidden waters at the bottom of the abyss.

Was that the tread of a horse? Fancy plays strange tricks with those who watch, but surely that sound resembled nothing so much as the quick beat of hoofs upon grass or heather.

Then the sound ceased, and a long tantalising pause succeeded. Ethel began to imagine that her senses must have played her false. No; for the rattling of loose stones, disturbed by a human foot, at the outer portal of the Hunger Hole, came at last to confirm the first impression that a horse's tramp had really sounded near, and then a man's form darkened the doorway between the two caves.

'Alice, look up! We are found!' cried Ethel, starting from the rocky bench; and almost at the same instant a voice, the very sound of which sent the blood madly coursing through her veins, exclaimed: 'There is some one here then. Alice—Miss Gray, can it be you? Ah! I see how it is,' added the speaker, as his further progress was barred by the gaping chasm, while his foot struck against a fragment of the broken bridge, yet clinging to its rusted holdfast in the rock. The voice was Lord Harrogate's.

'What good angel sent you to our help, brother?' said young Lady Alice, laughing and crying all at once, now that the tension of her overstrained nerves had slackened.

'She is a moorland angel, and here she is to answer for herself,' returned the young man, as Betty Mudge, hot and panting, appeared beside him in the entrance of the cavern. 'This good girl must have wings, I think, as well as a sharp pair of eyes. She almost kept up with my horse as we crossed the moorland, avoiding Bitternley Swamp, where *Bay Middleton* could never have made his way over the treacherous peat-hags. I can guess now how this awkward business happened.'

'But how to get at you, now I have found you!' added Lord Harrogate in some perplexity, after a pause. It was provoking, to be baffled by the eleven feet of sheer black emptiness that lay between the wet outer grotto and the dry inner compartment of the cave.

'Some one will perhaps arrive before long. A plank put across the gap would set us free,' said Ethel, advancing to the edge of the chasm.

'I wanted to jump it, but Miss Gray would not let me try,' called out Lady Alice.

'And Miss Gray was quite right, Miss Madcap,' answered her brother, scanning the width of the abyss. 'An uglier jump, or a less inviting, I never saw—at all events for a young lady to venture on. The worst of it is, that nobody excepting myself and this excellent Betty Mudge here, is in the secret of the Hunger Hole; so nobody is coming with ropes or planks or civilised contrivances of any sort. I have tied my horse to a bush below, just by the dead alder-tree; but I can't well make a suspension-bridge out of reins and saddle-girths, after all.'

'Please ye, my lord,' put in Betty, who had by this time recovered her breath—'please ye, I might run across to Farmer Fletcher's town, and ask him to get chaise ready for the ladies, and send some of his men with things 'cross Swamp.'

This was a very sensible proposition, for Mr Fletcher was the farmer who dwelt on the ridge, and at whose 'town' or farm-house, clustered round by cottages for the labourers who tilled the fields of that little oasis in the desert, the pony and wagonette had been left. The pony and wagonette had long since returned to High Tor in charge of the lad in the Earl's livery, who had sounded the first note of alarm as to the probable

fate of the missing ones; but the farmer possessed a green chaise and a serviceable cob to draw it, and would of course send over all that was needed.

'Better ask him then, from me, to send his chaise to the Crossroads, at the north end of the Heronmere. Bitternely Swamp will not be dry walking after the rain,' said Lord Harrogate.

Betty vanished on her errand like a fog-wraith at sunrise.

'Now let me see what I can do single-handed towards the good work,' said Lord Harrogate. 'It strikes me that the withered tree I spoke of, close to which my nag is tethered, might do good service now. There is something ignominious in being balked by a ditch like that.'

He went, and shortly returned, dragging after him the torn-up trunk of the alder of which he had spoken. Lady Alice clapped her hands. 'I like a man to be strong!' she said approvingly. Ethel said nothing, but her colour heightened and her eyes grew bright. All women do admire the manly virtues in a man, and strength, like courage and truth and wit, takes rank among them.

The uprooted alder-tree bridged the chasm, with some two feet to spare on each bank, and Lord Harrogate tested it with his foot, and assured himself that it would bear a considerable weight. With his handkerchief he tied one end of it tightly to the iron holdfast belonging to the broken bridge, and crossing with a light and elastic step to the other side, with no trifling difficulty persuaded the two girls to follow his example.

'I am afraid we were sad cowards,' said Ethel, when at last the dreadful passage had been effected, not very promptly or easily, for the narrow track afforded but a sorry and unsteady foothold, and there was that in the recollection of the ghastly depth below, and the remembrance of the narrowness and slippery roundness of the crackling tree-trunk beneath the feet, that was not unlikely to affect feminine nerves. Yet, propped by Lord Harrogate's arm, and encouraged by Lord Harrogate's voice, with shut eyes and scarcely throbbing hearts, the two girls did manage to get across.

Then came the hasty traversing of the damp outer cave, the emerging into the fresh free air from what had seemed a grave closing its hungry jaws upon the living, and then the long walk through the brooding twilight to the north end of Heronmere, where, thanks to the trusty Betty's winged feet, Farmer Fletcher's green chaise was in readiness to receive the two half-fainting girls, and where at length Lord Harrogate, who had hitherto led *Bay Middleton* by the bridle, as he walked beside the rescued prisoners of the Hunger Hole, was able to spring again into the saddle.

To Betty Mudge, as Lord Harrogate laughingly declared when he had escorted his sister and her governess safely back to High Tor, where the warmest welcome awaited those for whom the neighbourhood was already in full search, the whole credit of the rescue was due. Betty it was who, mushroom-gathering on the moor, had espied the signal of distress, Ethel's handkerchief, fluttering from the slender top of the hazel-tree that rose like a thin flagstaff above the rocks. Betty it was who, divining mischief where duller eyes might have seen nothing but a hazard or a frolicsome prank, had been making her way towards the Hunger Hole, when she caught sight of Lord Harrogate spurring across the moor in aimless

quest of the missing ones. And if there could be faith put in the word of as worthy an Earl and as estimable a Countess as any in the peerage, the wind of adversity should never more be suffered to blow too bitingly, for Betty's sake, on any of the Mudge family.

'I shall ask Morford, as a particular favour, not to repair that bridge,' said Lord Harrogate jestingly. 'No chance then that the Hunger Hole should turn again into a trap for catching young ladies.'

CHAPTER XXX.—MAN PROPOSES.

'Harrogate is going, you know, to leave us very soon,' Lady Maud De Vere had said, in her kindly matter-of-fact way, in the course of conversation with Ethel Gray; and Ethel had turned away her face instinctively, lest the burning blush which rose there unbidden should betray her secret to her pupil's sister and her own friend. Poor Ethel had communed with her heart in the still hours of more than one night since the evening that had witnessed her release from the Hunger Hole, and she could not but acknowledge to herself that she loved Lord Harrogate.

It was not a welcome conviction that forced itself gradually upon Ethel Gray. The attachment, hopeless as it perforce was, was a thing to be deplored, a misfortune; not a source of joy. Lord Harrogate could be nothing to her. He was almost as remote from her humble sphere of life as a Prince of the blood-royal would have been. There are girls who know, when their own personal vanity is at stake, no distinction of rank, and would set their caps without compunction at an Emperor. Ethel was none of these. To fall in love, even with an object as hopelessly out of reach as one of the fixed stars would be, is a forlorn privilege which has been claimed in every age by very humble persons of either sex. But to Ethel's proud, maidenly heart it was pain, not pleasure, to know that the future Earl, the future master of High Tor, had grown to be dearer to her than was well for her peace of mind. That she was in his eyes merely Miss Gray, his sister's governess, was to her thinking a certainty. And did not even wish that it were otherwise. Why should there be two persons unhappy, on such a subject, instead of one? It was much better as it was. She had begun to love him before, in that desolate cavern on the moor, he had appeared as the harbinger of safety. But she had not admitted to herself that this was so, until the whirl of strong feelings consequent on the danger and the deliverance had taught her to read her own heart, and to learn that his image was garnered in its innermost core. And now he was going away, going very soon. Well, it was better so. A young man such as he was could not always be expected to linger in a country-house. He was going, and she should see him no more. Doubtless it was for the best.

She was in the garden, and alone. A governess is seldom alone. But lessons were over for the day; and Lady Alice her pupil was up-stairs finishing a sketch, and Ethel had strayed out into what, from some household tradition of a foreign florist who had been invoked, when Anne was Queen, to shape and stock the flower-beds and to trim the luxuriant holly-hedge into Netherlandish

neatness, was called the Dutch garden. A pleasant spot it was, with its wealth of fragrant old-fashioned roses and gorgeous display of variegated tulips, screened by the immemorial holly-hedge from the rude north-east wind.

Quite suddenly, as she reached the other end of the holly-hedge, Ethel looked up at the rustle of the crisp green leaves, against which some one or something had brushed in passing, and her eyes met those of Lord Harrogate. The latter lifted his hat, but did not immediately speak, while Ethel neither spoke nor stirred. When the thoughts have been busy in conjuring up the image of a particular person, and the original of the air-drawn portrait appears, a kind of dreamy appreciativeness, which is of all sensations the most unlike to surprise, is apt to result. It was so in this case; and for a few brief instants Ethel looked at Lord Harrogate as she would have looked at his picture on the wall.

'I thought I might find you here,' said Lord Harrogate, dissolving the spell by the sound of his voice. 'I hoped I should,' he added, in a lower and more meaning tone. Ethel murmured something, stooping as she did so to lift the drooping tendrils of a standard rose-tree beaten down by the heavy rain of yesterday. 'Can you guess at all, Miss Gray,' continued the young man, with an evident effort to speak carelessly and confidently, 'why I wanted to find you here—and alone?'

It was not quite a fair question. Ethel, in her simple honesty, not caring to enter on a course of that verbal fencing which comes so naturally to a woman whose heart has not yet learned to speak, made no reply. Her colour deepened, and she became very intent indeed upon the bruised trail of the rose-tree.

'I am going away, as you know, and that very soon. My plans for the winter are quite undecided. I may not be back at High Tor for a good while,' said the heir to that mansion.

Now there were to be certain autumn manoeuvres in the open country near Aldershot Camp, in which that regiment of militia in which Lord Harrogate was a captain, and towards the perfection of whose drill and discipline he was thought to have contributed more than most militia officers find it convenient to do, had been selected to figure among the auxiliary forces on that occasion.

'Some friends want me,' explained Lord Harrogate, 'when our amateur soldiering is over, to go with them on a yacht-cruise in the Mediterranean, and so on to Egypt, and perhaps farther. What I choose will very much depend on you, Miss Gray.'

'On me?' She could not avoid answering this time, and her tone was one of genuine surprise. 'On me, Lord Harrogate!'

'On you. I should like all my plans to have some reference to you—Ethel!' said the young man, trying to get a full view of the beautiful blushing face that was half averted. 'I say again, can you guess why?'

'Do not ask me to guess,' returned Ethel, with a trembling lip. She was very much frightened. She had not the least experience in that science of flirtation in which the modern young lady graduates so early. But she divined that words had been said which rendered it necessary that other words should be spoken, and with what result! Could it be that the end of the interview would be the dashing down of the half-

idolised image that her fancy had set up as the emblem of pure chivalry?

'Only because I love you—love you very dearly, Ethel!' said the heir of High Tor; and as he spoke he took her unresisting hand in his and drew her towards him. For a moment Ethel was spellbound, her whole faculties absorbed in the one fact that he had told her that he loved her. Come what might, those words—those dear delicious words had sunk into her ear, and the memory of them must remain to the end of what would very likely be a lonely, loveless life; a treasure, her very own, of which none could rob her! But in the next minute Ethel drew her hand away from the hand that held it, and the crimson of indignant anger mounted to her cheek.

'My lord,' she said, in a voice that all her wish to speak and act calmly could not render quite steady, 'you should not have done this. I could not have believed it of you. It is not generous. It is not like yourself.'

'Why not?' Lord Harrogate blundered out the words awkwardly enough; but Ethel misunderstood him.

'Because,' she said firmly, 'my position beneath your mother's roof, in its very lowliness, ought to have been my protection from insult, which—'

'Insult!' flashed out Lord Harrogate, reddening too, and breaking almost roughly in on the girl's half-uttered speech. 'Can you deem that I mean to insult you when I tell you of my love—that I speak insolently, Miss Gray, when I ask you to be my wife?'

Ethel quivered from head to foot as her half-incredulous ears drank in the words. 'You meant—that is'—she faltered out feebly.

'I meant this,' said Lord Harrogate earnestly. 'Miss Gray—Ethel, darling, I have learned during the time that I have known you, to love you with a true and honest love. I am a clumsy wooer, I daresay, but surely you cannot have deemed that I had any other thought than that of asking you, for weal and woe, to share my fortunes?'

He tried to take her hand; but she eluded his grasp, and covering her face, sobbed aloud.

'Come, Ethel, come, my love! Let it be mine to dry those tears!' said the young man, passing his arm round her waist; but gently and firmly she released herself.

'You have made me very happy and very miserable all at once, my lord,' she said, turning round and facing him; 'but believe me, there must be no more of this. I thank you from my heart for the very great compliment of your preference for a girl so humbly born, without fortune or kindred. But I am your sister's governess; and it shall never be said that Ethel Gray brought dishonour and sorrow upon the noble family that had received her with so kindly a welcome. I have my own ideas of right and wrong, Lord Harrogate, and I know that I should be mean and base, even in my own eyes, were I to avail myself of—your great goodness.'

He was taken by surprise. He had made up his mind, and reckoned the difficulties of the step which he proposed to take. That he would meet with some opposition on the part of his family, he was of course aware. It might take much time and much persuasion to bring his parents, and especially the Countess, to consent to a match so

little calculated to advance his worldly prospects. But he was no shallow boy to cry for his toy, and then forget the bauble that had been withheld from him. His offer of marriage would no doubt render Ethel's position at High Tor for a time untenable. He had thought the matter over. There were relatives of the De Veres who, without being partisans of the match, would willingly offer a temporary home to such a girl as Ethel Gray, while his mother and Lady Gladys were in process of being converted to see the matter as he saw it. Ethel's unlooked-for opposition disconcerted all these projects. She was very grateful, gentle, and almost submissive in her bearing; but she was as steadfast as adamant on the point that it behoved her to return a respectful refusal to Lord Harrogate's proposals.

'Do not tempt me,' she said more than once; 'do not urge me to forfeit my self-respect, or be false to those who have put trust in me. I am no fit match for the future master of High Tor, the future Earl of Wolverhampton. Would the kind Countess have received me here, would Lady Mand have given me her friendship, had they dreamed of this?'

She was very firm. She let him infer, if he chose, that he was not indifferent to her; but to none of his instances would she yield her steady conviction that duty forbade her to say 'Yes' to his entreaties. He became—small blame to him for being so—almost angry, and tried if reproach would succeed where prayer and argument had failed. In vain. His reproaches brought the tears to Ethel's eyes, but she never flinched in her resolve.

If he pressed her unduly on this point, she said simply that she must go away. Let him forget her, or learn, as she hoped he would, to regard her as a friend, and then she need not leave High Tor. And then—

And then Lady Alice, Ethel's pupil, made her appearance, and there was no more opportunity for private conversation; and two days later, Lord Harrogate started for Aldershot.

(To be continued.)

STRANGE SEA ANIMALS.

By the term sea-squirts, the naturalist denominates some of the most remarkable animals which it is his province to study. In more polite phraseology the sea-squirts are termed 'Ascidians,' this appellation being derived from the Greek *askos*, meaning a wine-skin or Eastern leather-bottle, to which, in outward shape and form the sea-squirts bear a very close resemblance. And as a final designation, the animals under discussion may be known as 'Tunicates,' since their bodies are inclosed within a tough bag or 'tunic,' the chemical composition of which forms, as we shall presently shew, one of the notable points of their structure. The sea-squirts present themselves to the zoologist as a group of beings exhibiting many exceptions to the ordinary rules of animal organisation; and it may also be noted that they have attained a degree of scientific fame almost exceeding that which their most ardent admirers could have expected. The young sea-squirt has thus

been credited in certain scientific speculations with presenting the naturalist and mankind at large with a *fac-simile* of the early progenitor and far-back ancestor of the whole vertebrate group of animals, including man himself—in other words, it is maintained that the young sea-squirt, through some peculiar process of modification and elevation, has given origin to the highest group of living beings. With the promise before us of obtaining information regarding a most interesting group of animals, which are thus held by some *savants* to possess relations of no ordinary kind to man himself, the reader will require little incentive to follow out the steps of a brief inquiry into their life-history and relations.

The fame of the sea-squirts is by no means of modern date. Aristotle gives us a succinct description of them in his *History of Animals* under the designation 'Tethes,' and by the same name Pliny has made the sea-squirts of classic reputation, since we learn from this latter author that they were included as articles of importance in the pharmacopoeia of the Romans. In their commonest phases, the sea-squirts appear as little leathery bags of clear aspect, through the somewhat transparent wall of which the internal organs can be discerned. The resemblance of the animals to the ancient wine-skin has already been remarked. The wine-skin, as every one knows, was made of the stomach of some animal, or of the skin so arranged as to present two orifices or necks. Thus when we look at a common sea-squirt we see a veritable little 'leather-bottle,' measuring from half an inch to an inch or more in length, attached by one extremity to the rock at low-water mark, or to the shell we have dredged, and bearing on its upper surface two prominent openings, each supported on a short neck. The origin of the common name of 'sea-squirt' is by no means hard to trace. The incautious observer who picks up a sea-squirt which has through unpropitious fate been cast up on the sea-beach after a storm, after a short survey of the sac-like body, may possibly be tempted to squeeze it as a preliminary to further investigation. On being thus irritated, the animal will most likely retaliate by forcibly ejecting jets of water from the two orifices of the 'bottle,' this procedure possibly resulting in the relinquishment of the sea-squirt as altogether an unlikely and unfavourable object for further study. But the observation of this unpollite habit on the part of the animal, will be found to assist our further comprehension of its physiology, and of the manner in which the functions of its life are carried on.

A highly curious item of sea-squirt history is furnished at the outset by the consideration of the rough bag or 'test' in which its organs are inclosed. When the chemist analyses this part of the animal, he finds it to be composed in greater part of a substance known as *cellulose*. It so happens that cellulose is a most important constituent of plants, being almost as common in vegetables as starch. Hence zoologists accounted it a

strange and unwonted proceeding on the part of an animal, that it should manufacture in a seemingly natural manner a substance proper and peculiar to the plant-world. The multiplication of cases of like kind in animals has destroyed the novelty and unique nature of the sea-squirt's case; but none the less curious must the fact be accounted, that the animal should mimic the plant in the mode and results of its life. When the tough outer sac is cut open, we come upon a much more delicate and softer structure, known as the *mantle*. This latter forms an inner lining to the test, and is the structure upon the presence of which the sea-squirt's power of ejecting water depends. The mantle is a highly muscular layer, and lies next the organs and internal belongings of the animal.

The clearest mode of describing the structure of the sea-squirt is that of beginning with that neck of the bottle-shaped body on which the mouth opens. The mouth leads, curiously enough, not into a throat, but into a large chamber, named the *breathing-sac*. The walls of this chamber may be simply described as composed of a network of fine blood-vessels; the meshes of this network being provided with those delicate vibratile filaments, named *cilia*, the function of which is to keep up, by their movements, a constant circulation of the water admitted to the breathing-chamber. Just within the mouth-opening a few small tentacles or feelers exist, these organs serving to guard the entrance to the body. On the floor of the breathing-sac an opening may be perceived; this aperture leading into the throat, and being, therefore, by many naturalists termed the true mouth. And in the way of digestive apparatus, we find the sea-squirt to possess a stomach, intestine, and other organs.

It is highly interesting to note the manner in which the sea-squirt obtains its food. The nutritive wherswithal consists of sedimentary matters, such as minute animals and plants, these substances being drawn into the breathing-sac along with the currents of water which are continually being taken into the body. The nutritive sediment is collected together by certain folds of the lining membrane of the breathing-chamber, and is thus transferred to the mouth-opening below. The breathing-chambers of the sea-squirts, it may be noted in passing, frequently afford lodgment to tiny dwellers in the shape of little pea-crabs. The writer has noticed these little lodgers to issue forth at night from the mouth of the sea-squirts, when the latter have been kept in an aquarium, in order to pick up particles of food on the floor of their abode. The crabs retreated to their shelter on the slightest alarm; and this case of companionship presents one of those curious instances of animal association which at present we are wholly unable to explain.

The food being converted into blood in the digestive system, we may next inquire as to the

means which the sea-squirt possesses for circulating the blood through the body. In higher animals, the heart and blood-vessels perform this important task; and in the sea-squirt we find these structures to be represented; the sea-squirt's heart indeed, in respect of its peculiarity of action, being without a parallel in the whole animal world. The heart consists of a simple tube, from each end of which blood-vessels pass, some being distributed to the breathing-chamber, and others to the body generally. In the highest animals the heart has the double function of driving pure blood through the body, and of circulating impure blood through the breathing organs for purification. It is noteworthy to observe, that by a curious and, as already remarked, altogether unparalleled contrivance, Nature has succeeded in causing the simple tube-heart of the sea-squirt to perform the work done by the complex organ of higher animals. When we observe the movements of the sea-squirt's heart, we may see it to propel the blood by its pulsations at first to the breathing-chamber for purification. Then a pause succeeds, and the heart is observed to pulsate in the reverse direction, and to drive the blood from the breathing-chamber through the body. Probably no better illustration of the manner in which, by a modification of function, Nature compensates for simplicity of structure, could be had, than that afforded by the sea-squirt's heart.

The breathing-chamber, as we have seen, receives fresh sea-water from the outside world, this water containing the vivifying oxygen required for the purification and renewal of the blood. Having given up its oxygen to the blood contained in the fine blood-vessels of the breathing-chamber, and its sediment to serve for food, the great bulk of water contained in the breathing-sac has now to be got rid of, to make room for a fresh supply. This process is effected in the most admirable manner through the currents created by the little filaments or *cilia*, which cause a constant flow of water to pass through the network walls of the breathing-chamber into a second sac or bag which lies parallel with it. This latter sac receives the name of the *atrium*, and communicates with the outer world by the second neck or orifice of the body. Hence the water which enters by the mouth-opening, after passing through the breathing-chamber, is ejected by the second aperture of the body, and affords the material wherewith the sea-squirt vents its indignation on prying humanity in the shape of the *jets d'eau* which have procured for it its popular designation. The sea-squirt regarded in relation to its sedentary habits, would seem to require no great exercise of nervous powers. Accordingly we find its nervous system to be represented by a single mass of nervous matter, placed near the mouth, and from which nerves pass to the other parts of the body. The acts of a sea-squirt may thus be regarded as purely of the character we are accustomed to name 'automatic.' It is provided with instincts enabling it to carry on the acts of its life and to exhibit a certain degree of irritability, without at the same time knowing the 'reason why' of its own actions.

The sea-squirts present no exceptions to the universal rule of Harvey, *omne animal ex ovo*—this philosopher believing in the universal development of the animal-form from an ovum or egg. But unlike most higher animals, the young sea-squirt

does not come from the egg in the likeness of the parent. It first appears as a tadpole-like body, this creature—the larva as it is named—being produced in some thirty hours after the development of the egg begins. The head of the tadpole is provided with pigment spots or rudimentary eyes, and with three little suckers, by means of which it ultimately attaches itself to fixed bodies, prior to assuming the form of the adult and perfect Ascidian. The tail of the tadpole-larva next becomes retracted within its body, and therein disappears, whilst after fixing itself, the well-known features of the sea-squirt become duly developed. A Russian zoologist has remarked that in the tail of the sea-squirt a long rod-like body is to be seen. Now in the lowest fishes, the spine exists in a similar and rod-like condition; and hence, by a certain school of naturalists, it is urged that the vertebrates may have originated in the past from some form resembling the sea-squirt larva, in whose tail we are therefore invited to behold the first stage of the vertebrate backbone or spine. It is noteworthy to observe, however, that the opinions of these naturalists are by no means accepted by the scientific world at large; and one eminent German observer declared that the rod-like body in the sea-squirt larva's tail was not situated in the back, but in the opposite region of the body, and that therefore it could not be regarded as corresponding to the 'backbone' of higher animals.

Certain new relations of the sea-squirt become of exceeding interest from their departure from the more usual and staid type of Ascidian structure. Amongst these errant members of the sea-squirt tribe the most remarkable perhaps are the *Salpa*—clear, gelatinous animals, met with swimming in long connected chains on the surface of the sea in tropical regions. The celebrated novelist Chamisso, author of the charming story, *Peter Schlemiel or the Shadowless Man*, who to his literary tastes united a striking aptitude for natural history research, discovered that the young of these chain-salpa invariably appears as a *single* form; whilst each single salpa has the power of producing a connected chain. Thus the salpa sea-squirts exist in two distinct forms—chain-salpa and single salpa, and to use Chamisso's own words: 'A salpa mother is not like its daughter or its own mother, but resembles its grand-daughter and its grand-mother.'

Another curious group of the sea-squirts is that known by the name of the *Pyrosoma*, a name literally meaning 'fiery-bodies.' These latter forms exist as connected masses of sea-squirts aggregated together, so as to form a hollow cylinder or tube, closed at one end; this animal-colony swimming on the surface of the sea, by the admission and forcible ejection of water from the interior of the tube. Such a means of locomotion reminds us of a veritable hydraulic engine, and is decidedly a useful modification of the common sea-squirt's habit. The pyrosomas exhibit a strange phosphorescent light, seen also in such animals as the jelly-fishes. These luminous sea-squirts when seen in shoals, have well been described as 'miniature pillars of fire, gleaming out of the dark sea, with an ever-waving, ever-brightening, soft, bluish light, as far as the eye could reach on every side.' Side by side with this description from the pen of a distinguished naturalist, may be placed the poetic

realisation of a similar scene by Sir Walter Scott, who in the *Lord of the Isles* has happily noted the luminosity of the sea when,

Awaked before the rushing prow
The mimic fires of ocean glow,
'Those lightnings of the wave';
Wild sparkles crest the broken tides,
And flashing round the vessel's sides,
With elfish lustre lave;
While far behind, their livid light
To the dark billows of the night
A gloomy splendour gave.

THE POINT OF HONOUR.

A STORY OF THE PAST.

SHORTLY after Waterloo had been fought, one of our English regiments (which had taken a distinguished part in that great victory) stationed in a Mediterranean garrison, gained an unenviable notoriety there by a sudden mania for duelling that broke out amongst its officers, and which threatened to become so chronic in its character as seriously to interfere with the discipline of the corps. Quarrels were literally 'made to order' at mess-time for the most trifling affairs, and scarcely a day passed without a hostile meeting taking place, which the colonel—a weak-minded man—expressed himself powerless to prevent. Indeed he had already been sent to 'Coventry' by his subordinates, which, as our readers doubtless know, is a kind of social excommunication that, when acted upon in an English regiment, generally ends in the retirement from the corps of the individual on whom it falls. It was so in this instance, for the colonel saw that the vendetta-like conduct of his officers towards him was gradually divesting him of all authority in the eyes of his men; and as he had none but his social inferiors to whom he could turn for counsel and advice, he was compelled to relinquish his command and return to England. On arrival in this country he lost no time in proceeding to the Horse Guards, where he sought and gained an interview with the Duke of Wellington, to whom he gave a graphic account of the state of affairs which existed in the regiment he had just left.

The Iron Duke listened attentively to the narration, and knitted his brow in anger as the colonel related the story of the duelling; and when the latter had finished speaking, he exclaimed in an unmistakably stern and uncompromising tone: 'It is *your* fault, sir! You should have brought some of the ringleaders to a court-martial, and cashiered them on the spot. You have sadly neglected your duty, and that is a thing which I never pardon.'

The colonel left the Horse Guards in a very crest-fallen state, and he was hardly surprised when he saw in the next *Gazette* the announcement that 'His Majesty had no further need of his services.'

In the meantime the Duke had obtained a special audience of the Prince Regent, to whom he explained the condition of affairs in connection with the regiment in question. The result of the interview was that Colonel A—, a well-known martinet, then on half-pay, was sent for, and the

circumstances explained to him; the Prince offering him the command of the regiment on condition that he would undertake to cure the duelling propensities of its officers. Colonel A—— was delighted at the prospect of active service, and he willingly accepted the task assigned to him, it being understood that he was to be granted a royal indemnity for anything serious which might happen to anybody else in his endeavours to put a stop to the duelling. He was a man of high reputation, and had previously held other difficult commands, being known throughout the army as a good soldier but a stern disciplinarian.

Such was the old soldier's feelings at the special honour conferred on him that on leaving St James's Palace he actually forgot to return the salute of the sentinels posted at the gates, to the great astonishment of the latter, who knew his punctilious habits.

On his arrival at the garrison he lost no time in making himself acquainted with his brother-officers. He had already laid out his plan of action in his own mind, and was fully determined to allow nothing to swerve him a hair's-breadth from the path of duty. At the mess-table he behaved with studied politeness and amiability of manner; and his subordinates indicated that they were greatly pleased with their new commander. He chatted pleasantly with all, from the senior major down to the youngest ensign, and when the cloth was removed, regaled them with the latest gossip and doings of London society. Before they separated for the night, however, he took the opportunity of informing them in a very quiet manner, that he had heard of the frequent duels which had lately taken place in the corps, and that it seemed a matter of regret to him that they could not manage to live in peace and amity. 'However,' he said, 'if it be your wish, gentlemen, to fight out your quarrels in this way, I shall interpose no obstacle to your doing so. But this can only be by your pledging your word of honour *now*, to the effect that in future no duel shall take place without my permission having been first obtained. As I am your colonel, it is necessary that my authority should be acknowledged in all that relates to the honour of the regiment.'

The officers looked at each other and then at the colonel, and a somewhat embarrassing silence ensued; but it was broken by Colonel A——, who said: 'Don't be afraid that I shall refuse your request; on the contrary, I shall only be too pleased to grant my permission if, on examining the facts of the case, I find sufficient reason to think that the applicant's *amour propre* has been wounded, and that a hostile meeting is indispensable.'

At these reassuring words the young fire-eaters were satisfied, and at once gave the promise demanded; and Colonel A—— then retired to his chamber, where, overcome with the fatigue of a rough voyage, he soon found himself snugly ensconced in the arms of Morpheus.

On the following morning he was rather rudely awakened from a refreshing slumber by a loud rapping at his chamber-door; and on challenging his early visitors, he was informed that it was Captain Lord Vellum and Ensign Warbottle who wished to speak to him on a matter of the gravest importance.

'You might have chosen a more convenient hour for your visit, gentlemen,' said the colonel, who was naturally loath to rise from his bed at five o'clock on the first morning after his voyage.

'It is an "affair of honour," colonel,' was the significant reply, 'and cannot be delayed. We beg you will admit us instantly.'

The colonel rose and opened the door to the early comers. They were two handsome young men, who had on the previous evening already attracted Colonel A——'s attention by the extreme friendliness which they exhibited for each other. They respectfully saluted their commanding officer as they entered the room, and the latter broke an awkward silence by demanding of them the object of their visit.

Ensign Warbottle again raised his hand in salute as he replied: 'We have come to ask your permission to fight, colonel.'

'Indeed!' exclaimed Colonel A——. 'I thought you were great friends.'

'Yes, colonel, we have been most intimate friends from our youth upward,' said Lord Vellum, 'and we respect each other very sincerely; but we have had a dispute, and our wounded honour must be satisfied.'

'Then I presume that something very serious must have occurred, gentlemen, to make the only remedy for it a recourse to the pistol?'

'It is indeed a very serious matter, colonel,' replied Ensign Warbottle; 'and it is this. After you had left the table last night, we chatted over what you told us about the doings in London lately; and in the enthusiasm of the moment, I remarked that I should like to be there, riding at the head of a troop of Life Guards, and escorting the Prince Regent, with my silver helmet glittering in the sun and my drawn sword in my hand. Whereupon Lord Vellum said with a sneer that I was a feather-bed soldier, and that a leathern helmet would be quite good enough for such as I. I took no notice of this remark; but I was annoyed and excited; and when he further asserted that the officers of the Life Guards wore brass helmets, human nature could stand it no longer, and I gave him the lie. He retaliated by striking me on the face; an insult, Colonel A——, which justifies me, I think, in demanding a hostile meeting.' The last words were said in a manner which admitted of only one meaning, and the two young officers exchanged glances of mutual hatred and defiance.

'It is indeed grave, gentlemen,' sententiously remarked the colonel: 'the helmets worn by the officers of His Majesty's Life Guards are neither silver nor brass, but white metal lacquered with silver-gilt; but this information will not, I presume, alter the position of affairs. Do you still wish to fight the question out?'

'Certainly, sir!' exclaimed the two officers.

'Very well,' replied the colonel gravely, 'far be it from me to interpose any obstacle to your meeting, gentlemen; but this duel must be a serious one, as befits so important a question as the Life Guards' helmets, and not an affair resulting in a mere scratch, as I am given to understand is generally the case in these mess quarrels. Remember that you are British officers and not Spanish bravoos, and that the honour of a British officer can only be vindicated by the death of his

opponent. Go, gentlemen, and fight your duel; and I will meet the survivor on his return.'

The two young men saluted the colonel and retired. A few minutes afterwards, they and their seconds were seen hurrying off to the place of meeting—a spot which is known in the garrison to this day as 'Duel Avenue.'

Three hours later, Colonel A—— went down into the parade-ground to inspect the regiment, and he was surprised to see both Lord Vellum and Ensign Warbottle amongst the officers who approached him to give their morning salute. The latter had his arm in a sling; and to the stern inquiry of Colonel A—— as to whether the duel had yet taken place, he replied, with a forced smile lighting up his face: 'Yes, colonel; his lordship has given me a nasty scratch in the arm.'

'A scratch in the arm!' exclaimed the colonel contemptuously. 'And do you call *that* fighting, gentlemen—do you call *that* fighting? And for so important a question as the helmets of His Majesty's Life Guards! Bah! it is nothing! This matter must be fought over again, under pain of instant dismissal from the service if my order be disobeyed!'

'But'—— began Lord Vellum, attempting to express his satisfaction at the reparation his wounded honour had received.

'But me no *but*, gentlemen!' exclaimed the colonel angrily. 'I have the Prince's instructions on this point, and it is for *you* to vindicate your own honour in a proper manner, or retire disgraced from His Majesty's service.'

This alternative was one not to be thought of; and it need scarcely be said that the young fire-eaters chose rather to fight again than be cashiered. The duel was fought again, and this time Lord Vellum was shot through the body—a wound which laid him on a sick-bed for two months.

During this long period many quarrels had taken place at the mess-table, some of which had been settled by the colonel acting as 'arbitrator'; and others stood over for his permission to fight—a permission which he refused to grant until the result of Lord Vellum's illness should become known. In the meantime Colonel A—— had communicated with the Duke of Wellington, from whom he received explicit instructions to carry the matter out to the bitter end, as the only means of putting a stop to a matter which was fast becoming a world-wide scandal.

Lord Vellum was carefully attended to during his illness by his 'friend and enemy' Ensign Warbottle, to whose efforts he not only owed his life, but was enabled at the end of the two months to take a short walk every morning. His recovery then proceeded rapidly, and he soon became enabled to walk without any support whatever.

The two friends were walking together one morning, when they suddenly found themselves face to face with Colonel A——.

'Ah, gentlemen, good-morning!' exclaimed the latter. 'I am delighted to see his lordship out again, especially as it will now enable you to finish your *affaire d'honneur* in a more satisfactory manner.'

The young officers, scarcely believing their own ears, were for a time struck dumb with astonishment, and they gazed at each other and at the colonel with looks of bewilderment and despair.

'You see, gentlemen,' said the colonel gravely, 'that this question of the Life Guards' helmets is of such importance that I deemed it advisable, since his lordship's illness, to write to the Duke of Wellington on the subject; and I have here His Grace's orders that the duel should be renewed again and again until the life of one of the combatants has been forfeited.' As he spoke, Colonel A—— drew from the breast-pocket of his coat a large letter, bearing on its envelope the words 'On His Majesty's Service' in large black letters, and in one corner the notice in red ink, 'Very Urgent.'

'But,' said the young ensign, 'his lordship has not recovered yet; besides'——

'When one can walk,' interrupted the colonel, 'one can also fire off a pistol; and it is not conducive to the interests and dignity of the service that so important a question as the equipment of His Majesty's body-guard should any longer be left undecided.'

The two young officers, who had cemented their friendship anew during the period of illness, here took each other's hands and gazed long and silently into each other's face. Colonel A—— turned away to hide his emotion; for being really possessed of a kindly disposition, he began to regret the stern and unbending part he had been called upon to perform. Brushing the signs of his weakness away from his eyes, he turned once more towards the young officers and said: 'Gentlemen, I have orders from England to supersede you in the regiment to which we all have the honour to belong; and I am only to waive the execution of these orders on condition that the duel is renewed, as already stated. Your honour is absolutely in your own hands, and you must choose your own course. I leave you to decide, gentlemen, what that course shall be, and bid you for the present adieu.' So saying, the colonel left the two friends to decide upon their own fate. They ultimately decided to consult with their brother-officers on the subject, and to be guided by the general opinion. This opinion turned out to be in favour of another fight; and they once more proceeded to the place of meeting, each mentally resolving not to injure the other, but each exchanging portraits and letters for their friends. The fatal weapons were discharged, and Ensign Warbottle fell to the earth with a shot buried in his heart.

The grief of Lord Vellum knew no bounds, for he had been led to believe that the balls had been withdrawn from the pistols. He threw himself on the inanimate body of his friend, and could with great difficulty be removed therefrom. At length he was conducted to the house of a married officer; and from there he mailed a letter to Colonel A——, tendering his resignation, and reproaching the latter with the death of his friend.

The same afternoon, Colonel A—— assembled the other officers, and addressing himself especially to those whose applications to fight were in suspension, declared himself ready to grant one more permission on the same conditions as the other, namely that 'for honour's sake' the combatants should fight to the death. In the pause which ensued, one officer after another saluted the colonel respectfully, and then retired as silently as they came, leaving him alone in the mess-room and master of the situation.

It was a rude lesson which these officers had received, but it fully accomplished its purpose, and from that day to this duelling has been almost unknown in the British army.

'SUPERS' ON THE STAGE.

SUPERNUMERARIES on the stage, ordinarily called 'supers,' receive a small pay, but are not reckoned within the rôle of actors. They make up a crowd, when a crowd is wanted in the piece, and so on. Though viewed as a kind of nobodies, they cannot be done without, and managers need to take care not to give them offence.

These humble players have been aptly described as serfs of the stage, for whom there is no manumission. Let them work as hard as they will, play their parts as well as they may, their merits meet scant recognition either before or behind the curtain. For the wage of some threepence an hour, they have to submit to being bullied and badgered, and put to all manner of personal discomfort. Still, with a sense of inferiority, the super considers himself an actor. He treads but the lowest rung; but his foot is on the theatrical ladder. The climbers above may superciliously ignore the connection; but he feels that he too is an actor, and sometimes asserts his fellowship; like the poverty-stricken fellow who publicly hailed David Garrick as his 'dear colleague,' on the score that it was his crowing that made the ghost of buried Denmark start like a guilty thing upon a fearful summons; and the less obtrusive snuper who, when told of Maccready's death, exclaimed: 'Ah! another of us gone!'

It is recorded that a French super playing an assistant-footman in a popular *opéra-bouffe* for the first time, fell down in a fit, brought on by the excitement consequent upon his having to 'create the rôle.' Too much zeal is always inconvenient. At a performance not very long since of *Richard III.*, the armies contending at Bosworth were so carried away by professional ardour that the mimic fray came very near the real thing; and one gallant archer introduced himself to the manager's notice with an arrow through his nose, so astonishing that gentleman that he saved the wound with half a sovereign. The next evening the casualties rose to such alarming proportions, that a like treatment would have well-nigh exhausted the treasury.

Such realistic combats would have delighted Forrest the American tragedian, famous for his 'powerful' acting. Rehearsing the part of a brave Roman warrior at the Albany Theatre, Forrest stormed at the representatives of the minions of a tyrant for not attacking him with sufficient spirit. At last the captain of the supers inquired if he wanted to make 'a bully-fight of it,' and received an affirmative answer. Evening came, and in due course the fighting scene was reached. Forrest 'took the stage,' and the half-dozen myrmidons advanced against him in skirmishing order. 'Seize him!' cried the tyrant. Striking a pugilistic atti-

tude, the first minion hit out from the shoulder, and gave the Roman hero a fair 'facer;' the second minion following up with a well-judged kick from behind; while the others rushed in for a bout at close-quarters. The eyes of the astounded actor flashed fire; there was a short scrimmage of seven, and then one super went head first into the big drum and stopped there, four retired behind the scenes to have their wounds dressed, and the last of the valiant crew finding himself somehow up in the flies, rushed out upon the roof of the theatre bawling 'Fire!' with all the energy left him; while the breathless tragedian was bowing his acknowledgments of the enthusiastic plaudits of the excited audience.

Considering how often the super changes his nationality, one would expect him to be too thorough a cosmopolitan to cherish any insular or continental prejudices. They nevertheless have their sympathies and antipathies. 'Sure, sir,' said an Irishman who had for some nights died a glorious death fighting for Fatherland, 'it's mighty unpleasant to have to be a German; I'd rather play a Frenchman.' He had to be contented by receiving the manager's assurance that if he continued to work up his agony well, he might be permitted to change his uniform at the end of the month. Greater success awaited a stalwart navy, who after crossing the Danube several times at Alexandra Park, declared he must 'chuck it up' if he could not be a Turk. His desire was granted; and the next afternoon he was pitching Russians into the water with a will.

In the old days of the Paris Cirque, a rule is said to have obtained, compelling supers who had incurred the management's displeasure to go on as 'the enemy,' destined to succumb to native valour, by which means the difficulty of getting men to appear as the foes of France was obviated. When the *Battle of Waterloo* was first produced on the English stage, in one of the battle-scenes the French troops drove a British division across the mimic field. This was done for a few nights. One morning, after rehearsal, the leader of the supernumerary red-coat corps, gathering his followers around him, said: 'Boys, we mustn't retreat before the Johnny Crapauds again, to be goosed by the pit. It's all very well at rehearsal, but when it comes to real acting it won't do. Let us turn upon the yelling demons and pitch them into the pit!' And they did it too, astonishing the 'Frenchmen,' to say nothing of the audience; as greatly as Mr George Jones was once astonished by certain theatrical pirates. He, as an American sailor, had to rescue a fair captive from the clutches of the aforesaid ruffians. Unfortunately he had contrived to mortally offend the four supers concerned; and when he rushed to the lady's aid with: 'Come on, ye villains! One Yankee tar is more than a match for four lubberly sharks!' instead of leading off in a broadsword fight, the pirate captain shouted: 'I guess not!' and seizing Jones by the legs and arms, the pirates carried him off the stage, deposited him in the property closet, and then returning,

bore off the damsel to their rocky retreat; leaving the curtain to come down before a very much puzzled audience, to whom no explanation was vouchsafed.

Somebody—we think Mr Dutton Cook—tells a good story of an *accessoire* once attached to the Porte St-Martin Theatre. M. Fombonne had won managerial praise for the adroitness with which he handed letters or coffee-cups upon a salver and his excellent manner of announcing the names of stage-guests and visitors. Naturally enough, he thought his services might be more liberally rewarded, and made his thought known.

'Monsieur Fombonne,' said the manager, 'I acknowledge the justice of your application. I admire and esteem you. You are one of the most useful members of my company. I well know your worth; no one better.'

Glowing with pleasure at this recognition of his merits, M. Fombonne, with one of his best bows, said: 'I may venture then to hope'—

'By all means, Monsieur Fombonne,' interrupted the manager. 'Hope sustains us under all our afflictions. Always hope. For my part, hope is the only thing left me. Business is wretched. The treasury is empty. I cannot possibly raise your salary. But you are an artist, and therefore above pecuniary considerations. I do not, I cannot offer you money; but I can gratify a laudable ambition. Hitherto you have ranked only as an *accessoire*; from this time you are an actor. I give you the right of entering the *grand foyer*. You are permitted to call Monsieur Lemaître *mon camarade*; to *butyger* Mademoiselle Theodorine. I am sure, Monsieur Fombonne, that you will thoroughly appreciate the distinction I have conferred upon you.' The manager read his man rightly; the promoted *accessoire* was more than satisfied.

Not so well pleased was the English super who asked for a rise, pleading that he had been playing his part with the utmost care and zeal for a hundred consecutive nights. The manager inquired what part he played.

'Why, sir,' said he, 'I am in the fourth act; I have to stake twenty pounds in the gambling scene.'

'Very well,' quoth the manager; 'from to-night you shall double the stakes.'

Was it the same manager, we wonder, to whom Mr Sala's small super came crying for a redress of his grievance? He had been cast to play 'double-four' in a pantomimic game of animated dominoes; but the dresser had allotted 'double-four' to his brother Jim, and insisted upon his being contented with donning the tabard of 'four and a blank.' He had protested, he had howled, he had punched Jim's head, without effect.

'What am I to do?' the little pantomimist cried. 'I'd sooner give up the profession, than be took down so many pegs without never 'avin done nuffin.'

'Never mind, my boy,' replied the amused stage-manager; 'you shall play double-four; and if you behave yourself properly till Boxing Night you shall play double-six.'

That little fellow would never have made such a mess of his 'business' as did a street urchin who made his first appearance on any stage under the auspices of Mr J. C. Williamson, when the latter was playing *Struck Oil* in a country town.

Led on by the ear by Lizzie Stofel, and asked: 'What for you call me Dutchy?' the debutant blurted out: 'Cause you told me to!'—to the immense delight of the house. As soon as the act was over, he was told he might go in front; and before any one could stop him, he pulled back the curtain, climbed over the footlights into the orchestra, and coolly left the theatre.

At a performance of *Norma* at the Cirk Theatre, in which Cruvelli played the heroine, the little daughters of the carpenter were pressed into service to represent the children of the priestess. As the curtain drew up on the second act they were seen lying on Norma's couch quiet enough, for they were frightened nearly to death by the glare of light, the noise in front, and their unaccustomed surroundings. Their fright increased as Norma vented her jealous rage in recitative; and when, dagger in hand, she rushed towards them, they gave a shriek, tumbled off their couch, and ran off the stage as fast as their legs would take them, while the theatre rung with laughter, and Norma herself was fain to sit down until she had recovered from the effect of the unexpected episode.

Bolero the clown never evoked heartier merriment than that caused by his first appearance in public as one of the 'principal waves' in the nautical piece *Paul Jones*. It was at Sadler's Wells Theatre, soon after the 'real water,' for which that house was long famous, had given place to the conventional canvas sea with its wave-rolling boys underneath. The last scene represented the ocean, bearing on its expanse of waters two ships preparing for action. The waves rolled as the boys bobbed up and down, and all would have gone well, had not Master Harry discovered a small hole in the canvas above him. Into this hole he put two fingers, intending to take a peep at the front of the house. The rotten stuff gave way; the waters of the Atlantic divided, and disclosed a small head besmeared with blue paint—the result of friction against the painted cloth. Catching sight of this, young Joe Grimaldi, who was the captain in command of one of the vessels, called out: 'Man overboard!' while the stage-carpenter shook his fist at the appalled offender, causing that luckless young rascal to disappear from view, and bob with such vigour at a remote distance, that a sudden storm seemed to have broken over the ocean far away.

An American critic, disgusted with the mob in *Julius Caesar*, when that play was acted lately at Booth's Theatre, because they showed no discrimination, cheering the mearest soldier walking in procession, while they let Caesar and Antony go by unrecognised, insists upon the supernumeraries being better taught. It is certainly the duty of the stage-manager to see that they are properly instructed, but it is no use to ask too much of them; like the actor-manager who called upon his supers to assume an oily smile of treacherous defiance; and the author of *Joanne d'Arc*, who in his stage directions requires the representatives of the English spectators at the procession to the pyre to give vent to a buzz and murmur of hatred and exultation; and the representatives of the Amazon's countrymen to express their feelings in a buzz and murmur of love, pity, and sympathy. Such exacting gentlemen remind one of the French manager who fined one of the

supernumeraries engaged in *Paul et Virginie* for not making himself black enough, and afterwards discovered that the man he had fined was a nigger born.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE paragraphs on the use of zinc as a preventive of scale in steam-boilers, in the *Month* for March last (*ante* 207), have brought us many inquiries for further particulars. One correspondent wishes to know what length of time the lump of zinc will last? to which we answer, that on this point there is nothing more precise in the original Report than that the zinc lasts the usual time of working the boiler between the periods of cleaning. The zinc is more efficacious in the form of an ingot or solid lump, than when small heaps of clippings are employed; and we cannot imagine that it would be difficult for any intelligent person to determine by observation the dissolution of the zinc.

The theoretical explanation of the preservative action is, that in the process of oxidation the zinc borrows oxygen from the air dissolved in the feed-water only. The two metals, zinc and iron, surrounded by water at a high temperature, form an electrical 'pile' with a single liquid which slowly decomposes the water. The oxygen flies to the most oxidisable metal, the zinc, while the hydrogen is set free on the surface of the iron. This release of hydrogen goes on over the whole extent of the iron in contact with the water, and the minute bubbles of this gas isolate at each instant the sides of the boiler from the incrusting substance. If the quantity of this substance is small, it becomes so penetrated by the bubbles that it remains soft as mud; and if in greater quantity, coherent incrustations are formed, but in such a state of isolation as to be readily separated from the iron.

This remarkable action of zinc was first discovered in 1861, during the repair of a steam-vessel at Havre; and since then it has with approval been taken into use in some of the large manufacturing establishments of France. Readers desirous of consulting the original Report will find it in the *Bulletin de la Société d'Encouragement pour l'Industrie Nationale*, No. 51, March 1878, which may be obtained through Messrs Trübner, the well-known London publishers, or any foreign bookseller.

The Institution of Mechanical Engineers have published their usual yearly list of subjects on which they would be glad to have papers for reading at their meetings. As may be supposed, their scheme includes all branches of mechanical engineering; but we mention a few as likely to occupy the attention of some of the many ingenious artificers who are always inventing or improving. For example, there are hot-air engines, engines worked by gas, and electro-magnetic engines. Corn-mills, results of working with an air-blast and ring-stones. Flax, lace, and knitting machin-

ery. Wood-working machines, for morticing, dovetailing, planing, rounding, surfacing and copying. Paper-making and paper-cutting machines. Machines for printing from engraved surfaces, and type-composing and distributing machines. Best plans for seasoning timber and cordage. Ventilation of mines. Prevention of rust in iron ships and tanks; and a way to diminish the dead-weight in railway trains.

One of the subjects is improvements in light-houses; by which we are reminded that a new lighthouse at the Eddystone is talked of. The present structure was built by Smeaton in 1756-59; and ever since, as long before, as indicated by the name, the sea has been wearing away the rock on which it stands, and now threatens to undermine the foundations. The new tower would be built on an adjacent rock with, as we may easily believe, all the best improvements in construction and lighting.

Descriptions have been given at meetings of the Institution of machines for pressing cotton in bales for shipment. Some machines will press twice as much cotton into a bale of given size as others; which effects an important economy as regards stowage and in cost of packing, for it is estimated that the outlay for fuel for the pressing engine amounts to only a penny a bale.

Messrs Siemens' improvements in the dynamo-electric machine appear likely to settle the question as regards transmission of mechanical power to long distances. Given the power to work one machine, it can be transmitted by wires to a second, from that to a third, and so on continuously through many miles. A waterfall or steam-engine of one hundred horse-power working the first machine in the series would produce fifty horse-power at a distance of thirty miles. Hence it would be possible to grind wheat, to shape iron in a lathe, to saw wood, or weave cotton by machinery, in a district where all the coal was exhausted. This consideration ought to be appreciated by the people who imagine that our coal-fields will all too soon be dug completely out. Another advantage of the dynamo-machine is that if thrown out of gear for a few minutes or for a longer time there is no loss or waste of power.

Considering that slag can be made into glass, and that slag is a disagreeable encumbrance which many manufacturers would gladly get rid of, a suggestion has been offered that, instead of being made of metal, tanks and cisterns should be made of slag glass, in a single casting. There would then be no leaky joints, no unpleasant taste from paint or metal; cleaning would be easy; and if large dimensions were required, a number of small tanks might be placed side by side, and connected by slag-glass tubes. When this suggestion comes to be adopted, there will be no need to inquire about prevention of rust in tanks, nor to be timorous of lead-poisoning.

Very tedious is the work of reducing tables of observations to their true value, whatever their nature. Observations of tides are no exception; and as their reduction is of great importance in working out a true theory of the tides, attempts have been made to accomplish the tedious task by machinery, and at length with success. Sir William Thomson, of the University of Glasgow, has now constructed what he calls an 'harmonic analyser,' with which he can work out the analyses

of a twenty-four-hour tide-curve in about a minute. It is usual in taking tidal observations that the gauge records the rise and fall in the twenty-four hours in the form of a curve on a sheet or roll of paper; and the labour of analysing the sheets of a whole year may be imagined. But, as Sir W. Thomson's machine will clear sixty or more sheets in an hour, a year's work may be satisfactorily disposed of in half a day. This will indeed be good news to the able investigators who have for some years investigated the voluminous series of arctic tides, and are still far from completion. Their work will be greatly simplified; but the machine by which this happy result is achieved involves some of the most refined principles in natural philosophy.

'The Worshipful Company of Turners' of the City of London have published their list of prizes for the present year, stating the conditions on which they will grant the freedom of the Company, and of the City if the Court of Aldermen agree, and sums of money and medals to successful competitors. Any one skilful in turning in wood, throwing and turning in pottery, and in diamond cutting and polishing, is qualified to compete, but will be expected to remember that 'beauty of design, symmetry of shape, utility, and general excellence of workmanship,' are qualities which will be considered in awarding the prizes. The specimens are to be delivered at the Mansion House, London, within the first week of October next.

Mr Du Moncel, in discoursing on the phonograph to a scientific Society in Paris, suggested that by successive improvements the instrument would be made capable of recording a speech with all the intonations of the speaker; and that sheets of phonographic music might be kept in a portfolio for the entertainment of amateurs many years after the air was first played or sung. But while waiting for that result, there might be contrived a clock which would speak, instead of striking the hours. Such a clock would announce one o'clock, two o'clock, as the hours passed by, and might be made to say *Time to get up*, at any required moment. But this is a trifle in comparison with what is reported from the United States—namely that steam has been applied to the phonograph, and that a locomotive provided with the proper apparatus can talk messages which would be heard at some miles' distance. In the Crystal Palace at Sydenham we lately saw the cylinder of the instrument made to revolve by clockwork. The result was that words and songs were reproduced with much more regularity than by the ordinary handle, as hitherto turned by the operator. As yet, however, much remains to be done before a speech or a song, as spoken or warbled into the instrument, shall be reproduced with faultless exactitude. As with the telephone, so is it with the phonograph—there is still a lack both of sound-volume, and quality.

Mr N. J. Holmes, well known as a scientific inventor and electrician, has brought out a portable self-igniting beacon, which may be placed on a wreck, a buoy, or in any position where a flashing signal is required, and render good service. When in use, it lights itself at any given moment; when once alight, cannot be put out by wind or water, will keep burning from fifteen to twenty hours, and shew itself by a flash every half-minute.

Flashing signals are sometimes wanted inland, far away from the sea; but along the coast an appliance that can be carried from place to place with a certainty that it will act as required, can hardly fail to be appreciated.

In a communication to the National Academy of Sciences, New York, Mr Le Conte treats of the 'glycogenic function of the liver and its relation to vital force and vital heat,' in a way which will perhaps be interesting to many readers. In the ordinary process of nutrition much sugar is formed in the body: if the health be good, the whole of the sugar is arrested in the liver, changed into a less soluble substance nearly related to sugar—namely glycogen, and is thus withdrawn from circulation and stored in the liver. This store is slowly recharged into the oxidable form of liver-sugar, and is re-delivered, little by little, to the blood by the hepatic vein, as the necessities of combustion for animal heat and vital force require. The sole object of the glycogenic function of the liver is to prepare food and waste tissue for final elimination by lungs and kidneys; to prepare an easily combustible fuel, liver-sugar, for the generation of vital force and vital heat by combustion, and at the same time a residuum suitable for elimination as urea. Glycogen-making is a true vital function; sugar-making is a pure chemical process. The former is an ascensive, the latter a descensive metamorphosis.

Mr Le Conte continues: In the well-known and usually fatal disease diabetes, sugar is excreted in large quantities by the kidneys. But the kidneys are not the organ in fault: they do all they can to remedy the evil by getting rid of the sugar which, in the blood, is extremely hurtful. In such cases the liver is in fault, and seems to have lost its glycogen-making power. It has been proved that an excess of sugar in the blood produces, among other hurtful effects, cataract and blindness. The cataract so common among diabetic patients is thus accounted for; and it is obvious that the physiologist who will discover a way to keep going the glycogen-making function of the liver will be a benefactor to the human race.

Well worth reading is Professor Boyd Dawkins' *Preliminary Treatise on the Relation of the Pleistocene Mammalia to those now living in Europe*, published by the Palaeontographical Society. It makes clear the evidence by which the relationship has been established, and abounds with interesting and remarkable facts in the history of the animals of Europe. For example, the reindeer lingered in Caithness down to the twelfth century, and, as Professor Dawkins observes, we see 'that it ranged still farther south in the Prehistoric age, and ultimately in the Pleistocene, it reached the Alps and Pyrenees. It is surprising,' he continues, 'that the lion, the panther, and the urus are the only three mammals which have been exterminated in Europe. The principal interest centres in the urus breed was introduced into Britain by the English is most important for the student of history. The distribution of the fallow-deer was due to the direct influence of the Roman power; while the northward distribution of the cat stands in direct relation to the intercourse which the people of France, Germany, and Britain had with the south and east of Europe.'

Mr Meldrum of the Royal Alfred Observatory, Mauritius, whose researches we have from time to time noticed, reiterates the expression of his opinion on the sunspot and rainfall question, and shews as the result of observation that there is a rainfall cycle for Europe and America as well as for India. 'I long ago,' he remarks, 'obtained similar results for India, Mauritius, the Cape, and Australia, as well as for the depths of water in the Elbe, Rhine, Oder, Danube, and Vistula, and have shewn that the mean rainfall curve for the mean sunspot cycle of eleven years exhibits the characteristics of the mean sunspot curve.' Mr Meldrum is satisfied that he has 'evidence of a connection between sunspots and rainfall nearly, if not fully as strong as the evidence of a connection between sunspots and terrestrial magnetism.' There are many anomalies; but 'underlying them all, and pervading them all, a well-marked rainfall cycle is assuredly to be found, especially for Europe, where the observations are most numerous.' It would be interesting to have a satisfactory proof that these theories are correct.

In 1874 the difference of longitude between Greenwich and Suez was determined under instructions from the Astronomer-royal. Since then, as we learn from Colonel Walker's Report on the Trigonometrical Survey of India, the differences between Bombay, Aden, and Suez have been determined, and the connection between England and India is now complete. In these later observations, clocks were compared through the telegraph cables, which effectually eliminated the 'personal equation' from the numerical result. 'It is believed,' says Colonel Walker, 'that this is the first instance of such perfection of method having been attained.'

A Report on the Progress and Resources of New South Wales, by Mr C. Robinson, published at Sydney, states that the estimated area of Australia is three million square miles, of which the colony in question occupies 323,437 square miles—that the population in 1871 was 501,579—that the clip of wool in 1876 amounted to 73,147,608 pounds—that the sugar-crop for 1875 was more than fifteen million pounds—that one seam of coal will yield 84,208,298,667 tons—that a bed of kerosene oil shale will turn out 2000 gallons of refined oil every week for seventy-two years—that in all (up to 1874) 12,387,279 tons of coal had been raised, and that the total weight of gold produced was 8,205,232 ounces. Add to this the other minerals, and ships, corn, wine, and cattle, and it will be seen that New South Wales may look forward with confidence to the time when, should the population become as dense as in England, it will contain within its borders a hundred million souls.

From a recently published Report we learn that the population of Tasmania is more than one hundred and four thousand, and that the total area of the island is nearly seventeen million acres, great part of which is suitable for the growth of wheat and other grain. Less hot and dry than Australia, Tasmania (or Van Diemen's Land, as it was formerly called) has a very salubrious climate, and, as we are informed, 'an excellent breeding-station for stud stock for all the Australian continent, especially as regards animals of large muscular development, and of the hardy constitution so requisite in the ox, the mutton-sheep, and the

draught-horse.' The best evidence that the Tasmanian climate deserves all that has been said in its favour is to be found in the fact, that the mortality of children, especially of infants under twelve months, is very small.

THE TWO ROSES.

Two roses once in my garden grew :
The one was brilliant and rich of hue ;
Proud of her beauty and perfume rare,
She spread her sweets to each passing air :
The other, timid and chaste of mind,
Shrank from the kiss of the fickle wind ;
Proud in the pride of her virtue meek,
She veiled the blush on her modest cheek.

Dazed with the glare of her gaudy bloom,
Drunk with the breath of her rich perfume,
I tended the one with ceaseless care ;
I marked the growth of each beauty rare,
And dreamed that all on some future day
Would own the power of her peerless sway.

At length my flower, that I loved the best,
I sought to take and wear on my breast,
That won from her parent stem to part,
She might rest awhile on my loving heart,
But down was the lure of her witching spell,
As fluttering to earth her petals fell ;
Her heart was rotten and dead at the core—
And I knew that my foolish dream was o'er.

I saw how poor was the full-blown blaze
That had charmed my senses and won my praise ;
And I thought at last of the timid flower
Which had pined unheeded for cooling shower,
But drought unslaked had her life-spent dried ;
So, fading and faded, she drooped and died.

I saw too now, with awakening eyes,
How near I had been to my longed-for prize ;
One half of the care I had spent in vain—
Care that had brought me but grief and pain—
If spent on the rose that had pined away,
Would have reared a flower so chaste and gay,
That the joy of its countless charms untold
My care had repaid a thousandfold.

Ah ! how oft in the toll and strife,
The chances and changes which we call life,
By slight and neglect in time of need,
We kill the flower, and we rear the weed ;
Then when we see it, and know too late,
We blame not ourselves, but curse our fate,
For no solace have we on which to lean,
When we know what we long for might have been.

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BIANCONI.

CHARLES BIANCONI was altogether a very remarkable person, and not less for his energy and perseverance than for his public services, ought to be kept in remembrance. He was by birth an Italian—not, however, an Italian of the lethargic south, but of the northern mountainous district bordering on the Lake of Como. We might call him an Italian highlander. Belonging to a respectable though not affluent family, he was born on the 24th September 1786. At school he made so little progress as to be thought little better than a dunce. People did not quite understand his character. His impulse was to work, not to study. He wanted to have something to do, and if put on a fair track, was not afraid of being left behind in the ordinary business of life. With this adventurous disposition, and with a good physical stamina, he was bound for eighteen months to Andrea Faroni, who was to take him to London, and there learn the business of a dealer in prints, barometers, and small telescopes. Faroni did not strictly fulfil his part of the contract. Instead of proceeding to London, he took the boy to Dublin, at which he arrived in 1803; so there he was started in a business career in Ireland when sixteen years of age. Helpless, friendless, without money, and ignorant of the English language, his fate was rather hard; but his privations only served to strengthen his powers of self-reliance. Like a hero, he determined to overcome all difficulties.

Faroni, his master, seems to have made a trade of getting Italian boys into his clutches. Besides Bianconi, he had several others, whom he daily turned out to the streets to sell prints in a poor kind of frames, always making a point that they should set off on their travels without any money, and bring home to him the proceeds of their industry. At first, Bianconi was at a loss how to carry on his dealings. The only English word he was made acquainted with was 'buy, buy;' and when asked the price of his prints, he could only count on his fingers the number of pence he

demand. In a short time, he picked up other words; and gave so much satisfaction to his employer, that he was sent off to the country every Monday morning with two pounds worth of pictures, and a munificent allowance of fourpence in his pocket as subsistence-money until he returned on Saturday evening. How he contrived to live on less than a penny a day, is not mentioned. We daresay, he often got a warm potato as well as a night's lodging from the kind-hearted peasantry to whom he exhibited his wares. Opening his pack was as good as a show. He carried a variety of Scripture pieces, pictures of the Royal family, and portraits of Bonaparte and his distinguished generals, all which were profoundly interesting, and found willing purchasers. On one occasion, an over-zealous magistrate, thinking there was a treasonous purpose in selling effigies of Bonaparte, arrested the young pedlar, and kept him all night in a guard-room without fire or bedding, and only in the morning was he liberated, almost in a perishing condition. Every Saturday night, Bianconi returned to Dublin to deliver the money he had gathered, and this he did with an honesty which commanded that degree of confidence and respect which led to his professional advancement.

Bianconi's rambles during three to four years took him chiefly in a south-western direction from Dublin, towards Waterford, Carrick-on-Suir, and Clonmel, in which neighbourhood he made many friends in respectable circles, who were anxious to help him with their countenance and advice, of which as a foreigner he stood in need. So encouraged, he dropped the trade of pedlar, and set up as a carver and gilder in Carrick in 1806. Not long afterwards, he removed to Waterford, and issued cards intimating that he was 'a carver and gilder of the first class.' It was a bold announcement; but he resolved to make up for deficiencies by incessant industry; and with the exception of two hours for meals, he worked from six o'clock in the morning until past midnight. Hear that, ye false friends of the working classes—ye preachers of the gospel of idleness! Bianconi

remained two years in Waterford, and having improved in menus and mechanical knowledge, he removed to Clonmel, in which he settled down for a permanence. Clonmel is a thriving borough of some importance, on the river Suir, chiefly in the county of Tipperary, and fourteen miles south from Cashel. We shall not go into any account of his growing trade in mirrors and gilded picture-frames; it is enough to say that Bianconi, by his suavity, integrity, and diligence in his calling, laid the foundation of his fortunes, by which he was enabled to project and carry out a very stupendous undertaking.

A grand thought burst on Bianconi. He conceived the idea of establishing a system of cheap and commodious travelling through Ireland. The only public conveyances were a few mail and day coaches on the great lines of road. Across the country there was no means of transit between market-towns, except by private or specially hired carriages. The plan fallen upon was to start public cars, each with two wheels, drawn by a single horse, and carrying six passengers—three on each side, sitting with their faces outward, in the Irish fashion, with the driver on an elevated seat in front. The attempt was made in 1815, beginning with a car from Clonmel to Cahir, and subsequently extended to Tipperary and Limerick. The thing took. A grievous public want was supplied, and supplied by a foreigner. From town to town, this way and that way over hundreds of miles, Bianconi's cars spread, and became a great institution. On certain routes, cars with four wheels drawn by two horses, with accommodation for twelve passengers, were established; and latterly there were cars drawn by four horses, accommodating sixteen passengers. At Clonmel there was a gigantic establishment, the centre of the organisation, and at the head of the whole was Bianconi, like the general at the head of an army—his carving and gilding business, of course, being given up, and nothing thought of but cars, horses, drivers, and way-bills.

Bianconi's head was not turned by his surprising success. He was not one of your foolish persons who, having hit upon a successful enterprise, leave it to its fate, and heedlessly take their ease. His genius for organisation was exercised now only for the first time. The smallest as well as the greatest matters occupied his attention; yet Bianconi was not a mere business monster, set on making money. He was generous in his gifts for pious objects and the support of schools; nor was he less noted for his profuse and genial hospitality. He had, however, higher claims to the character of a public benefactor. When his cars were generally established, he realised the pleasure of seeing the good they were doing. In a paper read by him at the British Association meeting in 1857, he speaks of the many advantages arising from the speedy and free communication he had set on foot. 'As the establishment extended, I was surprised and delighted at its commercial and moral importance. I found, as soon as I had opened communication with the interior of the country, the consumption of manufactured goods greatly increased. In the remote parts of Ireland, before my cars ran from Tralee to Cahirciveen in the south, from Galway to Clifden in the west, and from Ballina to Belmullet in the north-west, purchasers were obliged to give eight or nine pence a yard for calico for shirts, which they afterwards bought for

three or four pence. The poor people, therefore, who previously could ill afford to buy one shirt, were enabled to buy two for a less price than they had paid for one, and in the same ratio other commodities came into general use at reduced prices.' The introduction of railways naturally deranged the car traffic. But in 1857, Bianconi had still nine hundred horses, working sixty-seven conveyances, and travelling daily four thousand two hundred and forty-four miles. There was in fact as much car traffic as ever, only changed in many places into cross-roads, and running short distances in connection with railway stations—a fact which verifies what is obvious to everybody; for railways, instead of diminishing the number of horses in the country, as short-sighted people prognosticated, have greatly increased them. Bianconi felt a pride in thinking how through the agency of his cars the fisheries on the west of Ireland had been largely promoted, thereby contributing to the comfort and independence of the people; and he was prouder still to say, for the sake of Ireland, that his conveyances, though travelling night and day, and many of them carrying important mails, had never once been interrupted by any social disorder, and never suffered the slightest injury.

From prudential considerations, Bianconi continued a bachelor until he was well established in the car business, and was in good circumstances. When, as he thought, the proper time had come, and he had a handsomely furnished house in Clonmel into which he might introduce a wife, he in 1827 married a young and amiable lady, Eliza Hayes, daughter of a stock-broker in Dublin. Of this marriage there was a family of a son and two daughters. The son died while still a young man, and the eldest daughter, Kate, died unmarried. The youngest daughter, Mary Ann, was married to Morgan John O'Connell, M.P. for Kerry, and nephew of the famous Dan O'Connell. Surviving her husband, this lady has lately given to the world a memoir of her father, 'Charles Bianconi, a Biography' (Chapman and Hall, London, 1878), to which we have been indebted for a number of interesting particulars. Mrs O'Connell's recollections picture her father in his early married life as a man who gave little heed to home affairs. His time was divided on his cars, electioneering, and getting into the corporation of Clonmel. He was fond of his children, but too busy to think much about them. 'For a man of such excellent common-sense in most things,' says his daughter, 'he was not a judicious father. He suffered my handsome brother to grow up without a profession.' This is not said disrespectfully, but to present a type of men in married life, who, with excellent abilities and good intentions, habitually neglect the rearing of their sons to any useful purpose. Who could not point to lamentable instances of this indiscretion, and the unhappy consequences which follow?

Bianconi had an ambition. It was to be Mayor of Clonmel. Some will think this a weakness, but it was excusable. One who had begun life as a poor alien boy struggling with poverty, and cared for by nobody, wished to show that by the revolution of fortune he was qualified for a position of honour and dignity. His ambition was gratified. In 1844, he was unanimously elected Mayor of Clonmel for the ensuing year; and such was the satisfaction he gave as a magistrate,

that he was elected for a second term of office. For a position of this kind he was eminently qualified. He had learned to speak English with perfect fluency, and from observation was able to act his part in a manner equal to that of any native-born citizen. Intuitively he had caught up the fervour of the Irish character, as well as a knowledge of the legal disabilities which had hitherto exasperated the majority of the nation. A friend to justice and toleration, and on all sides desirous to promote peace and good-will, it is not surprising that he attained to popular favour.

In Mrs O'Connell's memoir of her father we have a glimpse of a few of his eccentricities. So anxious was he to be helpful when his interference could be of any use, that while acting as Mayor of Clonmel he did not mind clambering on the top of his cars to pack the luggage of passengers; and he would give himself any amount of trouble to get situations for young men in whom he had confidence. While generous in his charities, he was scrupulously parsimonious when there was a chance of making a good bargain. 'This trait of character, however, is not uncommon. We have heard related the anecdote of a wealthy London banker, who one day saw his coachman taking home a pie of tempting appearance for dinner. Inquiring the price of the pie, he learned that it cost half-a-crown. 'If you please, James, I'll take the bargain off your hands; there is half-a-crown for you, and you can easily get another pie for yourself.' So saying, the banker secured the pie, which would last him for dinner for a week. Bianconi was equally acute in trying to turn the penny. 'One day, in Fleet Street, just after he had engaged a four-wheeled cab, my father saw a stout gentleman walking very quickly towards him, and who was evidently in distress at not being able to find a conveyance. The spirit of Charles Bianconi, carman, woke up too strongly to be suddenly quelled. "I have a cab, sir," he said. "If you will give me your fare, I will set you down where you like." The stout gentleman was profuse with thanks, and said he wanted to go to the Exchange. When they were in the cab, he begged to be allowed to know to whom he was indebted. "My name is Bianconi," said my father. "The great Bianconi?" replied the gentleman. "And what is your name, sir?" replied my father, without half the politeness of his companion. "My name, sir, is Rothschild." My father, in telling me the story, admitted that he was so much overawed by the presence and the affability of so famous a man, that he had not presence of mind to return the compliment and say, "The great Rothschild?" This was by no means a singular instance of my father's eccentricities in this way; often at home, in Ireland, when he was driving in his own carriage along the high-road, he would take in a traveller who would otherwise have gone by the car, provided that he paid the car fare.'

In his broodings over change of circumstances, Bianconi had nourished another ambition than that of being some day Mayor of Clonmel. He wished to be a land proprietor, but not being a natural-born subject, he was not, according to law, eligible for buying land until he went through certain formalities in 1831, after which he looked about for a suitable investment. His first and principal acquisition was Longfield, a property in Tipperary, extending to about a thousand English

acres. On it was a large and cheerful house, overlooking the Suir, and well-wooded pleasure-grounds sloping down to the river. Here, with splendid views of distant mountains, Bianconi took up his residence—at his arrival on taking possession there being a grand flare-up of tenantry with no end of cheering, for the new landlord's beneficence and means of disbursement were pretty well understood. Bianconi did not disappoint expectations. When famine, from the failure of the potato crops, spread over the land in 1848, he employed all who would work, and no one died from want at Longfield. His many improvements in fencing, draining, and building cottages with slated roofs gave some offence to neighbouring proprietors of the old school; but he did not mind being looked coldly upon, and by his independence of character gained general esteem and respect.

Advancing in life, Bianconi disposed of his interest in the car system which he originated, several new proprietors taking his place. In 1861, he revisited Italy with his family, but found himself out of unison with all that fell under his notice. Some family property that devolved on him, he presented to several poor relations. It was a pleasure for him to return to Ireland, with which all his feelings were identified, and where he had made numerous warmly cherished acquaintances—among others, Daniel O'Connell, with whom he was in frequent correspondence. His daughter speaks of the immense mass of letters and papers which he left behind him, and presents us with a few specimens from persons of note, all in a compulsory strain. Referring to what he had effected by his ingenious enterprise, Lady Blessington writes to him from England—'I thank you for discovering those noble qualities in my poor countrymen which neglect and injustice may have concealed, but have not been able to destroy. While bettering their condition, you have elevated the moral character of those you employ; you have advanced civilisation while inculcating a practical code of morality that must ever prove the surest path to lead to an amelioration of Ireland. Wisdom and humanity, which ought ever to be inseparable, shine most luminously in the plan you have pursued, and its results must win for you the esteem, gratitude, and respect of all who love Ireland. The Irish are not an ungovernable people, as they have too often been represented. My own feelings satisfy me on this point. Six of the happiest years of my life have been spent in your country [Italy], where I learned to appreciate the high qualities of its natives; and consequently I am not surprised, though delighted, to find one Italian conferring so many benefits on mine.'

In 1866, when seventy-nine years of age, Bianconi suffered a serious misfortune. When driving a private car, part of the harness snapped, and he was thrown violently to the ground. His thigh-bone was broken; and rarely at his advanced age does any one recover from the effects of such accidents. In a moment of time he had been made a cripple for the remainder of his life. He now only moved about with crutches, or was wheeled about in a Bath-chair; yet he undertook journeys, of course with proper attendance, and did not lose his characteristic cheerfulness. 'When long past eighty, when he got to be stout, lame, and helpless, he would visit the boys' Reformatory

in the Wicklow Mountains,' and encountered other risks inappropriate to his age and infirmity. By the governing authorities in Ireland he was held in much esteem for the benefits he had conferred on the country. 'That amiable, accomplished, and deservedly popular Viceroy, Lord Carlisle, never failed to single out Mr Bianconi at the Royal Dublin shows, or at the other places of public resort, when he happened to be present in his wheeled chair, for they were great friends, and Lord Carlisle esteemed him very highly. At first it was hardly expected he would have lived long after his mishap; but by God's grace he remained with us for nearly another ten years.'

Afflicted with paralysis and confined to bed, poor Bianconi passed peacefully away after a long and useful career. Mrs O'Connell, who was attending on him at the last, strangely omits to give the date of his decease, which was September 22, 1875, when within two days of being eighty-nine years of age. His body was interred in a mortuary chapel, which he had prepared for himself and family within the grounds at Longfield. Although he had latterly been unable to appear in public affairs, his loss was felt to be national. Looking to the manner in which he self-reliantly rose from obscurity to distinction, and to the success of his vast undertakings, his memory cannot but be endeared to his adopted country, which stands particularly in need of men with his sound common-sense and commercial enterprise. In conclusion, we might almost be warranted in saying that Charles Bianconi did more practically to advance the civilisation and the prosperity of Ireland than all its professed patriots and politicians put together.

W. C.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XXXI.—TO REMIND.

'GENTLEMAN—that is, person—wanted most particularly to know—please to see him, Sir Sykes!' deferentially hinted the under-butler, sliding on noiseless feet up to the angle of his master's library table. 'He was very pressing—send in card,' continued the man, slurring over the words he uttered with that inimitable slipperiness of diction of which the English, and indeed Cockney man-servant possesses the monopoly, and which seems obsequiously to suggest rather than boldly to announce. Sir Sykes looked up in some surprise.

'Did he mention what he wanted?' he asked.

'No, Sir Sykes,' replied the under-butler, edging the emblazoned tray on which lay the card, a little nearer, as an experienced angler might bring his bait within striking distance of the pike that lay among the weeds.

'You may shew him in—here,' said Sir Sykes, as, without taking the card, he read the name upon it, and which was legibly inscribed in a big, bold, black handwriting. With a bow the under-butler withdrew to execute his master's orders.

Great people—and a baronet of Sir Sykes Denzil's wealth and position may for all practical purposes be classed among the great of the earth

—are proverbially difficult of access. It is the business of those about them to hedge them comfortably in from flippant or interested intrusions which might ruffle the golden calm of their existence; and suspicious-looking strangers by no means find the door of such a mansion as Carbery, as a rule, fly open at their summons.

The man who had on this occasion effected an entry was not one of those whose faces are their best letters of recommendation. The card he had given bore the name of Richard Hold, and under ordinary circumstances, such a caller as the mariner would never have succeeded in being put into communication with a higher dignitary than the house-steward or the groom of the chambers. However, by a judicious mixture of bribing and bullying, the visitor had induced the under-butler to do his errand. Under certain circumstances, half a sovereign is a sorry *douceur*, even to an under-butler, but when tendered in company with enigmatical threats of 'starting with a rope's end,' by a seafaring personage of stalwart build and resolute air, such a coin becomes doubly efficacious as a persuader.

Richard Hold, master mariner, came in with a curious gait and mien, half-slinking, half-swaggering, like a wolf that daylight has found far from the forests and among the haunts of men. He was dressed in very new black garments, 'shore-going clothes,' as he would himself have described them; and the hat that he carried in his hand was new and tall and hard. He had even provided himself with a pair of gloves, so desirous was he to omit no item of the customary garb of gentlemen; but these he carried loose, instead of subjecting his strong brown fingers to such unwonted confinement.

'I cannot say that I expected this honour, Mr Hold,' said the baronet, stiffly motioning his unwelcome visitor to a seat.

'Tis likely not,' coolly returned the adventurer, as he took a survey of the apartment. 'This sort of place, I don't mind admitting, is a cut, or even two cuts above me. Still, business is business, Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet, and has got to be attended to, I reckon, even in such a gen-teel spot as this is, mister!'

There must be something in the American twang and the American forms of speech which all the world over hits the fancy of British-born rovers of Hold's caste, for in every quarter of the globe our home-reared rovers affect the idiom, and sometimes the accent, of Sam Slick's countrymen.

'I am scarcely aware, Mr Hold,' said the baronet with cold politeness, 'what business it can be to which I am indebted for the favour of your company, to-day.'

'Aren't you, though, skipper?' echoed Hold, whose natural audacity, for a moment repressed by the weight as it were of the grandeur around him, began to assert itself afresh. 'Well, let every fellow paddle his own canoe and shoe his own mustangs. The question is, Are you dealing fairly by me or are you not, Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet?'

'I assure you that you are talking Greek to me,' said the master of Carbery Chase, with a tinge of colour rising to his pale face.

'A nod,' persisted Hold, 'is as good every bit as a wink—you know the rest of it, mister. But

since you want plain speaking, you shall have it. You can't have forgot, no more than I can, that your bargain was just this: A certain young lady was to be married to a certain young gentleman.'

'I apprehend that you allude to—to my ward—Miss Ruth Willis,' said the baronet hesitatingly.

'You've hit it exactly,' exclaimed Hold, with a slap of his hard hand upon the crown of his hard hat, which sounded like a muffled drum, somewhat to the discomfort of its proprietor, who eyed its ruffled surface ruefully. 'When is the wedding to come off?'

Sir Sykes contemplated his ruffianly visitor with a disgust which it required all his prudence to dissemble.

'In civilised society,' he said coldly, 'events of that sort do not take place with quite so expeditious a disregard of difficulties as your very apposite question suggests. In the backwoods it is perhaps otherwise.'

'In the backwoods,' roughly retorted Hold, 'we don't shilly-shally about righting a wrong, no more than about the marrying of a young couple that hey made up their minds to it. And let me tell you, Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet, the superlative Saxony you fine gentlemen wear covers bigger rogues, often, than ever did the deerskin hunting-shirt with its Indian embroidery of wampum and coloured quills. Backwoodsmen! I've been in white-fisted company less to be trusted than theirs.'

Sir Sykes had imbibed too much of the spirit of that modern civilised society of which he spoke, to be readily nettled into a burst of anger by such taunts as these. Cool, save for one moment, from the first, the temperature of his calmly flowing blood seemed to grow more frigid as Hold's warmed.

'You have, I assure you, Mr Hold, no cause whatever for irritation,' he said smoothly: 'I mean—to use your own expression, which I willingly adopt—fairly by you. I neither repudiate nor ignore our tacit compact. It is my dearest wish that my son should become the husband of the exemplary young lady in whose prosperity you interest yourself.'

Hold gave a growl such as a bear, suddenly mollified by the gift of a glittering slice of toothsome honeycomb, might be expected to emit. His distrustful eye ranged over the baronet's plausible face, as though to test the sincerity of the assurance which had just been given.

'We're in the same boat,' he said, in a tone that, if dogged, was less sourly than before. 'Our pumpkins, I guess, ought to go to the same market, they ought. But fair words don't put fresh butter into a dish of boiled batatas. I'm a British bull-dog of the game old breed,' he added gruffly; 'and I keep the grip, however I'm handled. Is there a likelihood of the marriage coming off soonish?'

'I hope so,' returned Sir Sykes. He would have given much to have avoided the slight embarrassment which he was conscious that his manner indicated, and which was not lost upon Hold's watchful eye.

'No day fixed? No banns put up—stop! I forgot—you swell marry by special license of the Archbishop of Canterbury—no cake ordered; no fal-lals bespoken from the milliner; no breakfast; no orange-flowers, eh? Well, I wish to be reason-

able about it, Sir Sykes, but there must be an end of this. Do the young people understand one another, or do they not?'

'It does not answer to *brusquer* these things,' returned Sir Sykes apologetically.

'It does not answer to *what*?' interrupted Richard, to whose nautical ears the French word sounded odder than would have done a fragment of *lingua franca* or a scrap of *Eboe* or *Mandingo*.

'To be too precipitate,' explained the baronet.

'I have spoken to my son. He sees, I hope, the affair in a proper light. He is often in the society of Miss Willis, but—but—'

Sir Sykes wavered miserably here. All his department seemed to fail him before Hold's merciless eye, the very gaze of which probed him to the quick.

'Aren't you captain in your own ship?' asked the adventurer curtly.

The baronet winced at the question. Captain in his own ship, in the sense that some men are commanders at home, he had never been. His own house, his own estate, had not from the first been managed in precise accordance with the views of him who owned them. But he had been a decorous captain, a captain who walked quarter-deck as solemnly as the greatest Tartar afloat, and who got lip-service and eye-service as a salve to his vanity, until quite recently.

Now there was a strong and not altogether an obedient hand on the helm. A new broom was making, in the person of Enoch Wilkins, attorney-at-law, a clean sweep of various time-honoured abuses such as always do grow up about a great estate, and the wails of the indignant sufferers could not always be kept from reaching the reluctant ears of Sir Sykes. People who were docked of perquisites came in respectful bitterness of soul to the baronet, and humbly prayed that he would take their part as against Wilkins the lawyer and Abrahams the steward.

Captain in his own ship! The word was a telling one, and it hit him hard. He was only captain in an ornamental sense, because Carbery was his freehold, and the baronetcy his, and he alone could sign receipts and draw cheques. He had loved his ease much; and now it was perpetually invaded. He was sorry for dismissed gamekeepers, and for tenants whose tenure was to expire on Lady-day. He gave them drafts on his banker as a plaster for the smart which he nevertheless felt sure was deserved. An unrespecting City solicitor, and the sharp London Jew whom Mr Wilkins had inducted into the stewardship, were swelling the rent-roll in despite of the feeble protests of the nominal lord of all.

'I can't compel Captain Denzil to take a wife of my choosing; that is beyond the power of a modern English father, at least where sons are concerned,' said Sir Sykes with a sickly smile.

'No; you can't do that, skipper. To knot the unretailed cat and give the young fellow six dozen for matrimony,' said Hold, chucking over the imaginary scene, 'would be too strict discipline for mealy-mouthed days like these. But you might let him have it, Sir Sykes, though not quite so downright. Make him understand that his allowances and his liberty all depend on good behaviour, and then see what comes of it.'

What Sir Sykes suffered during the delivery of this speech, could only be inferred from the fact

that his lips became of a bluish white and that he drew his breath gaspingly.

'Believe me, Mr Hold,' he said in a thin broken voice, which gained strength somewhat as he proceeded, 'you may intrust the care of carrying out your wishes—that is, our wishes—to me. I understand my son best, and I'—

He stopped again, gasping for breath, and the lines about his mouth, traced by pain, were visible enough to attract the notice of his unscrupulous guest.

'You shall have time, Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet,' he said apologetically; 'take a fortnight if you like. I'm to be heard of meanwhile at old Plugger's;' and he threw the card of that establishment on the table.

Then Sir Sykes rang the bell for wine, and the wine was brought. Hold tossed off a bumper of sherry.

'Your health, skipper,' he said; 'and success to the wedding.' And so, with an impudent leer, he picked up his tall shining hat and departed.

CHAPTER XXXII.—A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.

'It can't be done, sir, at the price. I'd do a good deal to meet your wishes and that, and I don't pretend to be more sentimental than my neighbours. But marrying is a serious sort of step, you know. One can't cry off and pay forfeit, if one changes one's mind a bit too late. Miss Willis is'—

Thus far Captain Denzil; but now Sir Sykes interrupted his son with an irritation unusual to him: 'Miss Willis is a great deal too good for you, I am afraid. Indeed I trust to her sound sense to keep some order in your affairs, and prevent you from driving at too headlong a pace along the road to ruin. Of course her pretensions to pedigree are very slight compared with our own, if that be the obstacle in your way.'

'Nobody cares much about ancient blood, in a woman at least, now-a-days,' languidly replied Jasper. 'She is lady enough to take the head of a dinner-table, or figure creditably in a London drawing-room, after a few weeks of training, and that's as much as need be looked for. And I admit that Miss Willis is—very clever.'

Except in the case of an authoress, no one ever applies the epithet 'Very clever' to a lady save as a species of covert blame. Sir Sykes felt and looked uneasy as the words reached him.

'If you have any personal objection'—he began.

'Not the least in the world,' unceremoniously interrupted Jasper. 'I'll even stretch a point, and say I rather like the girl than otherwise. She'd go straight, I daresay, once the course was smooth and clear before her. But I do not think, father, you are treating me quite well. Carbery ought, you know it ought, to go in the direct line, as such properties do.'

'I apprehend your meaning,' returned Sir Sykes in his coldest tone, 'to be that you resent as a grievance the fact that the estate is not entailed upon yourself. You should be more reasonable, and remember the singular circumstances under which I became master here.'

'It was a grand coup!' exclaimed the captain, with an envious little sigh. 'Such a stroke of luck does not come twice to the same family.'

'I got this great gift,' pursued Sir Sykes, 'from the hand of one who thought less of what he gave to me than of what, by making such a will, he took away from others. The old lord's self-tormenting mind led him to exult, in the hopes that his testament extinguished, in the injury done to kith and kin.'

'It was a sell for the De Veres,' muttered Jasper; 'they didn't on the whole take it badly.' He looked up as he spoke at the glimmering blazonry of the great stained-glass window, and realised, for the first time perhaps, the vexation which the caprice of the late lord of Carbery had inflicted on those of his own race and name.

'The property,' said Sir Sykes, 'having become my own a score of years ago, is mine to give or to withhold at my death, as in my lifetime I may judge fitting.'

'You have told me that, sir, pretty often,' retorted Jasper testily; 'of course it's yours, and you can leave it to the Foundling Hospital if you like.'

'Common policy then would dictate,' said Sir Sykes with deliberate emphasis, 'the study of my wishes. And I wish very much indeed that Miss Willis should become your wife.'

'I can't, as I said, do it at the price; really I can't,' rejoined Jasper sullenly, as he thrust his hand into a side-pocket and fingered the cigar-case that lay there. He did not dare to light a cigar in the library, much as he longed to seek solace in smoke; but he grew impatient for the interview to come to an end, and to recover his freedom.

'I offered a handsome income,' said Sir Sykes with an offended look. 'Had not the sum proposed proved sufficient, that was a difficulty not insuperable. You had the option of beginning married life with the revenue of an average baronet.'

'Yes; but you see, sir, you are a trifle above the mark of an average baronet,' responded the captain; 'and I naturally should like when my turn comes—I hope it will be a long time first—to fill the same position. A bare allowance, or a lump of settled money, won't make me the equal of an ordinary eldest son; and I don't see why, since by accident I'm not on a par with other fellows of my nominal rank and prospects, and I am required to marry without being allowed to choose for myself, I should not be put on a level with men of my own standing.'

Sir Sykes fidgeted restlessly in his chair, and the lines of pain about his mouth, which grew more sharply defined every day, deepened almost perceptibly.

'Consider what you are asking of me,' he said with an injured air; 'to make myself a mere tenant for life where I have been for twenty years owner in fee-simple! Sons do not ask their fathers to entail an estate for their benefit.'

'I don't see why I should be in a worse position than other fellows,' sullenly responded Jasper. 'I may have been extravagant and that sort of thing; but there's no reason why my extravagances should be totted up against me to a heavier sum-total than those of twenty I could name. Hookham, now, who let his father in for a hundred and eleven thousand the year that the French horse Plon-Plon won the Derby, is as safe of the Snivey estates as he is of the Snivey peerage.'

'The Earl of Snivey and his prodigal heir

Lord Hookham, answered Sir Sykes with cold urbanity, 'do not present a case, to my mind, precisely in point. You cannot in reason expect me, after the sacrifices I have already made on your behalf, to place you in the position, as you call it, of heir than as a man of the world.'

'And as a man of the world, sir,' said the incorrigible Jasper, 'I trust you will excuse my saying that I scarcely care to be huddled and hustled into marrying I don't know whom, unless at a very heavy figure, as my stock-broker, when I was fool enough to go on the Exchange, and burned my fingers over time-bargains, used to say. I can't think why you should mind my coming next, as concerns Carbery Chase here.'

This was a home question which, if arraigned before the stern tribunal of Minos and Rhadamanthus, Sir Sykes would not have found it easy to answer. He was in the habit of telling himself that Jasper was not a successor to whom the honour and welfare of a great family could with prudence be intrusted. Were he master, the old oaks in the Chase might soon be gambled down from their prescriptive loftiness, and mortgages might spring up like mushrooms. Here was a noble estate unencumbered, like some big diamond without a flaw to mar its lustre, and he was asked to let his spendthrift son inherit as of right. There were Lucy and Blanchette to be provided for. They would marry, doubtless, and their husbands would probably expect that the brides' hands should be heavy with much gold. The bulk of the property would devolve on Captain Denzil; but then it might be tied up with an ingenious testamentary rigour that should keep the future baronet in legal leading-strings through life. Sir Sykes cherished too lively a recollection of the shifts and straits of his own outlawed progenitor Sir Harbottle, to wish the reins of government to pass unreservedly into Jasper's unsteady hands.

But Sir Sykes had an unavowed motive for rejecting his son's proposition. He was by no means sure how Enoch Wilkins of St Nicholas Poultney would receive such a suggestion. Mr Wilkins, that over-zealous pilot, who had insisted on assuming the guidance of affairs, might be furious at hearing that Jasper was to be promoted from heir-presumptive to heir-apparent. There was no alliance between the captain and the shrewd turf lawyer, from whom so much of his lightly expended cash had been extracted. Jasper by no means relished the elevation of Mr Wilkins to be his father's Mentor and right-hand man. Mr Wilkins might guess that Sir Jasper would send his japed dead-boxes elsewhere than to St Nicholas Poultney. And yet Sir Sykes could not venture to offend Mr Wilkins.

The conversation was protracted for some half-hour or more, since Sir Sykes was sincerely desirous to carry his point; but it languished by degrees, and involved, as conversations on important topics are in real life apt to do, frequent repetitions of some stock phrase or threadbare argument. Sir Sykes essayed threats, veiled ones of course, and not very comprehensible even to himself. Jasper, however, was very little moved by such threats. There are things that a gentleman cannot do, and assuredly one of them is to turn his only son out of doors because he declines a wife of the parent's choosing. And to

no other menace was the captain amenable. He should probably, as a result of his father's displeasure, get no cheques for the next few months; but this stoppage of pocket-money could not much affect the happiness of a graceless prodigal who, had he once got a sufficient sum in his possession, would have turned his back at once on Carbery and all that belonged thereto.

Jasper, then, was singularly stubborn. He was in general as morally pliable as a jelly-fish, after the fashion of most so-called men of pleasure, but now he seemed for the nonce to have developed a backbone, and to be hard to bend. There was really some lurking sense of injury at his heart, and he felt on better terms with his own conscience than was often the case, as he resisted his father's instances that he should marry Miss Willis, commence housekeeping on five thousand a year, and be a reformed character as well as a Benedict. He felt that all was not right, and was assured that a bride worth the taking would not be urged on his acceptance with such pertinacity.

'I do not see,' repeated Jasper again and again, 'why I should be in a worse position than other fellows.'

From that formula, behind which, as behind a breastwork, he strongly intrenched himself, nothing could drive him. It was not, as he explained with almost unnecessary candour, that he had any undue delicacy with regard to mercenary marriages; but that what he stipulated for was to be on a level with other spendthrifts of his own degree and set, with young Lord Hookham, with Lionel Rattlebury, and wild Lord Viscount Squandercash, and the rest. Entail the estate, so that it must pass to him, Jasper, and post-obits would become practicable, and money be easily raised; and then Miss Willis was welcome to be the partner of his joys and sorrows—such was Jasper's simple train of reasoning. It was a heavy price, but he stood out for it.

Sir Sykes was not willing to pay the price, at the cost, it might be, of a second contest with Mr Enoch Wilkins, and the negotiation with his son came to no satisfactory conclusion. What was to be done? Hold had named a fortnight as the period of grace that he was disposed to grant; but the baronet was of opinion that it would not be politic to allow the time to expire without communicating with this man—who was in some sense his master. He would inform Hold of Captain Denzil's unexpected obstinacy, and plead for a further delay, and—yes—he would send money. Money has often a wonderfully lenitive effect upon the temper, and its softening effects should be tried upon this buccannering fellow.

Sir Sykes penned his letter, touching as lightly as he could on Jasper's recalcitancy, and expressing sanguine hopes for the future. He said nothing about the entail, which had been the subject of the haggling debate between himself and the captain. It would hardly be prudent to tell Hold of that, lest Jasper should find an unexpected ally to back his demand.

'We had better, under the circumstances, give him, as I believe whale-fishers say, a little more line,' wrote Sir Sykes in his confidential communication to Richard Hold, and he was weak enough to pride himself on his neat use of a nautical metaphor sure to tell with a seafaring man. And he signed a cheque for two hundred and fifty

pounds, payable to Mr Richard Hold, or order, and inserted it in the letter, which he despatched by that night's post. He could scarcely have done a more foolish thing.

OUR VOLUNTEERS.

SOME persons are old enough 'to remember the Volunteer system which prevailed in the early years of the present century. It was an enthusiastically patriotic movement, for the country was threatened with invasion by Bonaparte, who, however, as is well known, never got beyond preparations at Boulogne, and by the victory of Nelson at Trafalgar received an effectual check. Volunteering at that time, though very hearty, was at best never anything else than playing at soldiering. The members of the various corps were only civilians in uniforms. Discipline was imperfect. At any fancied affront, a man sent in his gun and walked off.

We can mention a case in point, which occurred about 1807. The colonel in command of the Westminster Volunteers, one day lost his temper on parade, and struck a member of the corps with the flat of his sword. Such was the general indignation at the outrage, that the greater number of both officers and men at once sent in their resignation, and the regiment was broken up. This anecdote was related to us by one of the sergeants, who resigned and sent in his sword and musket. Evidently, there could have been no solid reliance on a body of Volunteers so ill governed and held together so feebly. The whole fabric was at length dissolved, and was succeeded by militia regiments strictly under the articles of war.

The volunteering system of our own day has step by step attained the character of a Landwehr, or reserve force, liable, if the occasion arises, to support the army of the line and the militia. It embraces infantry, cavalry, and artillery, and is constructed on a proper military basis. As in former times, each town or district has its own regiment of Volunteers, which may be concentrated at a short notice by telegraph. In the infancy of the present movement, the peer and the artisan, the gentleman and the shopkeeper, all 'shouldered arms' together and marched gaily side by side. Dukes, earls, marquises, and cabinet ministers joined the ranks—Lord Palmerston (then Prime-minister) himself donning the uniform and learning his drill as a private in the London Irish Rifle Corps; while in the London Scottish, the Marquis (now Duke) of Abercorn did the same thing. This was all well and good; but it could not last long, nor did it. Liberty is the precious possession of all classes in this country, but perfect 'equality' and 'fraternity' such as the above incidents indicated are virtues which have not yet attained to any very great degree of perfection amongst us. And so it came to pass that these noble recruits, whose support at that time to the Volunteer cause cannot of course be over-estimated, were among the first who 'fell out,' to make way for those who really meant 'soldiering.'

Royal reviews and Easter-Monday field-days attracted to the ranks of our citizen army all those who loved volunteering for the sake of making a show; but now that the movement has settled down into real earnest military work, the true

manhood of Britain is to the fore—the spirit which looks upon hard work with as light a heart as it looks on pleasure, when there is a lesson to be learned or a great object to be gained.

The new movement was national in all its phases. The different corps adopted titles and mottoes which had some distinct connection or other with their country's history, or with the local traditions of the counties in which they were raised. In the former category are the two national corps we have already named; and in the latter may be reckoned the 'Robin Hoods,' with their uniform of Lincoln green, which is the only thing about them, however, that reminds one of the days of Robin Hood and his jovial band.

Though for some cause which we have never heard properly explained, there are no 'colours' or 'standards' in our Volunteer corps, each regiment has a motto, the favourite ones being *Defence, not Defiance* (which is the motto of the National Rifle Association), *Pro Aris et Focis* (For our Hearths and Firesides), and *Pro Rege et Patria* (For King and Country). If ever our Volunteers are used at all it will be in battalion formation, like the regular army, for an army of two hundred thousand men cannot all act as skirmishers, and their colours would be to them as much the embodiment of their country's honour as those of the line are to the regiments of the regular army. The Volunteers of 1804 possessed honourable emblems in the shape of banners or standards, many of which still adorn the walls of London's historic fortress—the Tower.

In the year 1860 the Volunteer movement received the patronage of Her Majesty the Queen, in a manner as practical as it was generous and graceful. The National Rifle Association, which may be said to be the mainspring of the whole affair, and which has since become one of our most popular institutions, had decided to hold the first annual contest in rifle-shooting at Wimbledon Common, and the great 'Tir National' of England was successfully inaugurated by the Queen firing the first shot. The rifle was laid for her, and Her Majesty pulled the trigger. By the aid of the 'mechanical rest' the bullet struck the bull's-eye, and thus with an omen of happy import was commenced the series of contests which to-day has given us an army of sharpshooters ready to 'do or die' for Britain. The Queen then announced that she would give a prize of two hundred and fifty pounds to be shot for annually, the winner having the choice of receiving it either in money or in a souvenir of the same value. This prize, which is called the 'blue-ribbon' of Wimbledon, can only be shot for by Volunteers; and to it are also attached the gold medal and badge of the National Rifle Association. The Prince Consort also gave an annual prize to be shot for, and this has been continued to the meeting by the Prince of Wales.

These royal acts at once put the seal of popularity upon the Volunteer cause, and prizes of all kinds were offered for competition. Things were at first somewhat chaotic at Wimbledon; but as time wore on, the common changed its fair-like aspect, in which refreshment booths occupied the most prominent place, to the spectacle which it now always presents on these occasions—namely that of a neat and well-ordered encampment where, while the meeting lasts, the strictest military

discipline is understood to prevail. Competitors from all parts of the world meet there annually, for many of the prizes are of a cosmopolitan nature. The Dominion of Canada and Australia send teams of marksmen, for whom special 'challenge cups' are prepared; while the Army and Navy, the two Houses of Parliament, and our great Public Schools also exhibit their skill in the use of the rifle.

Our Volunteers had a good deal to put up with in the first few years of the movement from the street arabs and other idlers, who could find no better employment than to fling all kinds of rough sarcasm and what may appropriately be termed 'gutter criticism' at the members of the different corps. An unfortunate Volunteer, for instance, was fined for shooting a dog on Blackheath Common as he was going to drill, and almost immediately every Volunteer was hailed in the London streets with the cry of 'Who shot the dog?' Again, when the Volunteers met in the public parks for drill they were closely surrounded by a critically tantalising crowd, which obstructed their movements and laughed heartily at their mistakes. The comic papers were also filled with amusing caricatures of our citizen soldiers; and a great deal was done even in high places to throw cold-water upon this patriotic and popular movement. It has now, we are glad to record, outlived all this, and has become enthroned in the hearts of Englishmen as one of our greatest institutions. It numbered at first some two hundred thousand men, but this included persons of all ages, sizes, and classes; and after the first flush of enthusiasm passed off, the motives which actuated many of them were not so much military zeal or any of the more solid military virtues, as a love of novelty and a taste for good-fellowship.

The Volunteers are now organised upon a somewhat different footing. No one is accepted as a recruit who is not physically able to undergo military work and marching; but should the Volunteer wish to quit the service, he must comply with the following rules as laid down in *Regulations for the Volunteer Force*. He must give to the commanding-officer of his corps fourteen days' notice in writing of his intention to quit the corps. He must deliver in good order—fair wear and tear only excepted—all arms, clothing, and appointments that may have been issued to him. And he must pay all money due or becoming due by him, under the rules of the corps, either before or when he quits the corps. When the above regulations have been observed, the Volunteer is free to bid adieu to the ranks. His uniform is supplied to him free, but only on condition that he shall make himself an 'efficient'; a condition which if fulfilled, will earn for the funds of his corps the government capitation grant of thirty shillings per year. Efficiency is gained by attending a certain number of drills and parades and gaining a regulated score of marks for rifle-shooting.

Thus at a small cost to the state the different corps are made self-supporting, the Volunteer himself being put to no expense beyond the time which he gives up to the necessary drills and parades. The Volunteers have now learned what military discipline is, and have, by their attending the exercises and manoeuvres of the regular army, shewn themselves willing to submit to it. Most

Volunteer officers also take a pride in knowing their duty, and are no longer helplessly dependent on the adjutant and the drill-instructor. Instead of being regarded in the light of a novelty, volunteering is now looked upon as a serious business by all engaged in it, and as a task which in its perfect fulfilment will render them worthy citizens of a great and widely extended empire.

The service which the Volunteer movement has rendered to Britain is of incalculable value, for besides giving us a defending army of nearly two hundred thousand 'efficient' men, trained to the use of every weapon known in warfare, it has been a school in which, during the twenty years of its existence, thousands have learned those elementary principles of military life which, in the case of an invasion, would enable them again to come forward in defence of their Queen and country. The very fact of Great Britain possessing such an army would deter, and for aught we know to the contrary, may have deterred hostile nations from invading her shores.

The two largest Volunteer corps are Scotch—namely the 1st Lanarkshire Artillery with seventeen batteries, and the 1st Edinburgh (Queen's) Rifle Brigade with twenty-five companies; these being the only two corps whose strength entitles them to two adjutants each. The militia and yeomanry trainings of 1876 were attended by seventy-six thousand, and nine thousand five hundred officers and men respectively; while the annual inspections of the Volunteers for last year resulted in an attendance of 159,373 men of all ranks.

We find by reference to the Annual Returns of the Volunteer corps, that no fewer than 16,306 officers and sergeants obtained Certificates of Proficiency in 1877. These are facts which it is consoling for the public to know, for they ought to dispel in the future any fear of the consequences of foreign invasion.

The Civil War in America shewed us what a Volunteer army could do; and it behoves this country now to see that this magnificent force which it has at its disposal should be placed on such a footing in relation to the other forces as will for ever secure its services. Our Volunteers constitute a force to which no other country can present a parallel; and as such, irrespective of its being the means of doing away with the evils of conscription, is worthy of all the support which the state can give it, for certain events within the past few years have shewn us to what straits a country is driven, and how great is the misery of its people when it has been successfully invaded. As a sign of the times too, we may note with satisfaction the patriotic feeling which has, in the present crisis of our national history, induced many Volunteer corps to offer their services to the government for garrison duty at home, in the event of our army proceeding abroad, one regiment—the London Irish—even going so far, we learn, as to place itself at the absolute disposal of the government for service either in or out of the United Kingdom.

Long may it be ere these shores are ever again approached by an enemy bent upon our destruction as a people; but we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that such an enterprise would perchance ere this have been effected if it had not been for the patriotic conduct of our youth, who have enabled Britain to cover herself with an impen-

trable shield, and to find in the arms and hearts of her own sons that indomitable strength which is best and most appropriately expressed in the peaceful words that form the motto of our citizen army—namely *Defence, not Defiance*.

MONSIEUR DE BOCHER.

BADLY as the streets of Paris were lighted at the close of the reign of Louis XV., the art of illuminating ballrooms was as well understood then as it is in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The guests who flocked to the receptions of M. de Bocher, after passing through streets in which a few flickering oil-lamps scarcely succeeded in making darkness visible, found themselves in the centre of floods of dazzling light, and surrounded by all that was bright, fashionable, and gay in the pleasure-loving city of Paris.

Times had much altered since the days of the Grand Monarque, and the hard and fast lines of society, then so rigidly observed, were now well-nigh obliterated. A precursor of the great Revolution which was hereafter to overthrow the state, was to be found in the invasion of the saloons of the nobility by financiers and capitalists, who were received with open arms by those who wished either to borrow money from them, or to recruit their shattered fortunes by alliances with the money-bags of the period. Nor was this all; for the poets and writers of the day, anxious to secure the support of well-known and wealthy patrons, flocked to these reunions, which they enlivened with their geniality and wit.

Monsieur de Bocher could lay but little real claim to the patrician prefix which he had for some years adhibited to his otherwise plebeian name. But he held a quasi-official appointment, which, although outside the Cabinet, gave him almost the dignity of a minister; while his well-known wealth and splendid entertainments attracted the best society in Paris. He was, moreover, a man of wit and learning, and as he possessed the somewhat rare faculty of playing the host to perfection, had an excellent cook and a cellar of first-class wine, his mansion in the Faubourg St Germain was one of the most popular in Paris. Dukes and peers, ambassadors and foreigners of distinction, the simple gentleman, the poet, the literary man, the barrister, and the capitalist, all found here a common ground for the display of their various talents. Fools were rare, for they soon found that the climate was not congenial; and the conversation was not only remarkable for its piquancy, but its intellectual character. Each guest, after paying his respects to Madame de Bocher, mixed at once in the throng, and was soon busied in discussing the last news of the day, or deep in the question which agitated Paris. Marmontel and Diderot, La Harpe and Helvetius, seldom missed a reception; but here, as indeed throughout Paris, Voltaire was the presiding genius. It was a hopeless struggle for any young author to attempt to hold his own against so powerful a

clique. Voltaire denounced him before his face; Diderot caricatured him at the Café Procope; he was jeered and laughed at everywhere, and ended by submitting to his tormentors. The result of such a censorship was not difficult to foresee; and in a short time no literary effort which did not contain at least a covert attack upon religion, in accordance with the principles of the fashionable philosophy, had a chance of success. Let us now tell the story of M. de Bocher's acquisition of wealth.

His origin indeed was of the lowliest, for his father was but a working mason in the days of the Grand Monarque. One evening, as the father was returning home with his work-basket on his shoulder and trowel in hand, a man wrapped in a long brown cloak, and closely followed by a carriage without any armorial bearings or ciphers, tapped him on the shoulder and asked him whether he would like to earn five-and-twenty louis. The mason eagerly acquiesced; and having entered the carriage, his eyes were bandaged, and the horses started off at a great rate. For several hours the carriage was driven rapidly about the streets of Paris, with the obvious intention of making the occupant lose all trace of the route he had traversed; and when the object had been accomplished, the carriage stopped suddenly in the court-yard of a large mansion. Bocher was then desired to alight; and was at once conducted, his eyes still bandaged, into a kind of cellar, where his eyesight was restored to him. Here he found two men, both armed, and with their faces concealed by masks. The poor man was in an agony of terror, believing that his last hour had come, but was somewhat reassured by the gestures of his companions, who, fearful of trusting their voices, made signs to him to make some mortar of the lime which was lying on the floor. A hole in the wall disclosed a recess; and the two men raising with difficulty a weighty strong box, placed it in the interior, and made signs to the mason to build up the wall afresh. Bocher, seeing that nothing was required of him but the legitimate exercise of his craft, quickly recovered his self-possession; and guessing that the proprietors of the treasure were obliged to quit the country, and had hit upon this device for concealing it until better times should dawn upon them, the notion of appropriating it to his own use flashed like lightning across his brain.

When he concluded his work, as if intending to give a last polish to its completion, he placed his hand, thickly covered with wet mortar, on the new wall, and thus left the distinct impression of his five fingers on the hiding-place of the treasure-deposit. The promised five-and-twenty louis were then faithfully counted out into his hand; his eyes were again bandaged, and he was re-conducted to the carriage, which after following the same course of deception for three long hours, at last deposited him in the same street as that in which the man in the brown cloak had found him.

From that day forth Bocher abandoned the use

of the hammer and trowel, and passed his time in wandering about Paris inspecting the houses advertised to be sold, directing his attention especially to the cellars and lower regions of the buildings; seeking everywhere, but without success, that imprint of his hand which would point the way to unlimited wealth. In the pursuit of this phantom, not only the twenty-five louis but all the little savings of his hard work rapidly melted away, and misery and hunger began to knock loudly at the mason's door. One after another he sold the petty articles of furniture which had embellished his humble home, to procure the bread which was necessary to sustain life; and pale and in rags he wandered about Paris, reading every new announcement of vacant houses, and became a nuisance to the porters intrusted with the care of shewing them.

Two years thus passed away—two long years, occupied day by day in seeking a fortune, and night by night in dreaming that it was found. He was returning home one evening, sad and dispirited, with the proceeds of the sale of the bed upon which his mother had died, and which had been one of the very last articles of furniture he possessed, when his eye was caught by a large posting-bill announcing the sale of a magnificent mansion belonging to the Duc de Cairoux, in the immediate vicinity of his own dwelling. He recollected the story of the sudden disappearance of the Duke, and on reading the bill, found that the property was sold under a legal decree, which constituted the heirs proprietors with a power of sale. A last hope crossed poor Bocher's mind, and he at once proceeded to the house, and knocked hastily at the door. It was almost dark, and no one paid any attention to his eager summons. After a sleepless night he again made his appearance at the portal of the Duke's mansion; but although it was now opened, another difficulty presented itself, for the porter hesitated to admit a man so ragged and dirty as the poor mason had become. At length, however, he agreed to do so upon the understanding that a servant accompanied the strange visitor during his survey of the premises. The powdered lackey was scarcely more courteous than the porter, and scornfully exhibited the rich furniture, pictures, and priceless china which adorned the apartments, to his humble companion. But these were not what Bocher had come to see, and at last he induced the man to shew him the cellars. Whilst the footman was desecrating upon the quantity and quality of the wines around them, Bocher was anxiously scrutinising all the walls, in hopes of finding that print on the mortar which was to open to him the door to untold wealth. It was all in vain; and deaf to the man's insolence, Bocher was on the point of leaving, convinced that his last hope had vanished like its predecessor, and that this could not have been the house he had visited on that eventful evening, when he suddenly perceived a small cellar situated in an angle of the wall, which had hitherto escaped observation. He turned back and examined it closely, his technical knowledge as a mason at once shewing him that the mortar in one part of the wall was much fresher than elsewhere. He approached the spot, and there—yes, there was no doubt about it—there were the marks of the five fingers, plain and distinct!

'At last, at last!' he murmured to himself; and to make assurance doubly sure, he traced out each of the impressions with a trembling hand. There could be no doubt whatever about it. At last his long search was ended.

Eight days afterwards the property was to be sold by auction, and numbers of the aristocracy of Paris sent their stewards to bid for it. It was put up at fifty thousand louis d'or, and two thousand louis were at once added by the steward of the Duc de Berri.

'Sixty thousand louis,' said a voice from a corner; and the audience turning round to look at the man who had the audacity to outbid the richest man in Paris, discovered a poor man whom they had supposed to be a beggar.

'Sixty thousand louis,' said the auctioneer; 'sixty thousand louis are bid, and this fine property is going for only sixty thousand louis!'

The steward added five thousand louis, and the offer was at once capped by the mendicant who bid seventy thousand louis. Thus the war was carried on until one hundred thousand louis were offered, and people were aghast at this extraordinary duel between the steward of the wealthy Duke and a miserable-looking beggar.

'One hundred—and—ten—thousand—louis,' slowly, but with emphasis, shouted the steward with a withering look at his ragged opponent. Bocher hesitated, for although he well remembered how heavy the strong box was, it was doubtful whether it contained so large a sum as this; and he was well aware that the penalty for non-payment was the Châtelet prison for life with all its horrors. There was not much time for reflection, for already the 'Going, going' of the auctioneer was sounding in his ears.

'One hundred and twenty thousand louis,' he shouted; and 'One hundred and twenty thousand louis are bid,' repeated the auctioneer amidst a breathless silence. This time there was no advance on the bidding; and after waiting the stipulated time, the property was knocked down to Bocher; and the discomfited steward of the Duke quitted the field of battle, revenging himself with a bitter jest as he passed his conqueror.

Bocher, with the penalty of non-payment of the enormous purchase-money staring him in the face, handed over the required sum within twenty-four hours, receiving in return the necessary title-deeds.

The mason became a dealer in monopolies, and finished by leaving an immense fortune and a patent of nobility to his son.

Not contented with the house in Paris which had satisfied his father's aspirations, the son built himself a splendid château at Montigny, where he had the honour of entertaining amongst other important personages, Louis XV. and M. de Voltaire. The château was built on a hill; and puffed up with the vanity of his riches, M. de Bocher had the presumption to attempt to surpass the great work of Louis XIV. at Versailles, by bringing the water from a greater distance and throwing it to a greater elevation. He had a theatre attached to the château, and lived the life of great land-proprietors in England, a state of things quite unknown in France. His museum of natural history, his collection of pictures by the old masters, his stud of horses, were all unrivalled,

and moreover he had the luck to enjoy his good fortune to the last, for he died on the eve of the great Revolution, leaving two sons behind him to enjoy his mysteriously acquired wealth.

FACTS WORTH KNOWING.

FROM inquiries made among French hatters by Dr Delaunay, some curious facts concerning heads have come to light. In families developing towards a higher intellectual standard, heads increase from generation to generation; while families failing intellectually, shew a regular decrease in size. The men who made the Revolution of 1789 had bigger heads than their fathers; while the sons of the present ruling families in France are cranio-logically so deficient that hats have to be made specially for them. In Paris the largest heads are to be found in the quarter of the schools, and among the schools themselves the secular stand above the ecclesiastical.

As flies are said to eat the animalcules in impure air, thus removing the seeds of disease, leanness in a fly is *primit facie* evidence of pure air in a house, while corpulency indicates foul wall-paper and bad ventilation. Talking of a foul and fresh atmosphere, there has lately been adopted in India a novel method of giving change of air to people who cannot afford to leave home. Patients go up in a balloon, which ascends to a certain height, and is there made captive. It seems that a few days passed in this atmosphere, which is quite different from that on the plains beneath, temporarily braces up the most languid of invalids. The importance to health of a free perspiration no less than of fresh air, and what dangers arise from perspiration being suddenly checked, has been proved by the fact that a person covered completely with a compound, impervious to moisture, will not live over six hours. On the occasion of some papal ceremonies, a poor child was once gilded all over with varnish and gold-leaf to represent the Golden Age. No wonder that it died in a few hours, when we consider that the amount of liquid matter which passes through the pores of the skin in twenty-four hours in an adult person of sound health, is about sixteen fluid ounces, or one pint. Besides this, a large amount of carbonic acid—a gaseous body—passes through the tubes; so we cannot fail to see the importance of keeping them in perfect working order by frequent ablutions or other means.

It has often been stated that ocular weakness and diseases in various forms appear to have been rapidly increasing in recent times. Dr Loring, in discussing before the New York County Medical Society the serious question, 'Is the human eye gradually changing its form under the influence of modern civilisation?' confirms the opinion, so far at least as short-sightedness is concerned. Constant study, now incidental to the lives of so many, has, he says, a tendency to engender this derangement of the eye, and it is often transmitted to descendants. In his opinion, near-sightedness is a disease of childhood, and rarely develops itself after

the fifteenth or eighteenth year. On examining the eyes of over two thousand scholars in the New York public schools, Dr Loring found that the proportion of those in a healthy condition were eighty-seven per cent, among children under seven years, while between that age and twenty-one, the proportion of normal eyes was but sixty-one; which shews, he thinks, that near-sightedness increases directly with the age to which schooling is extended. In Königsberg, Germany, he found considerably more than half the population were short-sighted; and in America it is more commonly met with among the older eastern cities than the new ones of the west. Among the most prominent causes of the disease are, in his opinion, a sedentary life, poor food, bad ventilation, and general disregard of hygienic requirements—all conducing to a laxity of tissue, of which near-sightedness is an indication.

The experiments of Mr G. F. Train on himself would seem to give some corroboration to the reports of fasting girls that crop up from time to time. In an attempt to prove that eating is merely 'an acquired habit,' he persisted in going without food for six days, and expects in time to be able to do without nourishment for a much longer period! His experiments, he asserts, prove three things: First, that all stories of terrible agony in starvation are nonsense; second, that fasting really improved his intelligence; and third, that a person who has fasted six days has no ravenous appetite. This, however, we should think is accounted for by the sufferer feeling quite past eating at a certain stage of starvation.—The problem of how to live on sixpence a day has been elucidated by a London physician, who writing in advocacy of vegetarianism, affirms that he knows many persons who keep themselves strong and well on that sum. He further says: 'I have myself lived and maintained my full weight and power to work on threepence a day, and I have no doubt at all that I could live very well on a penny a day.' The 'penny restaurant' lately announced in New York, where a small cup of coffee, bread and butter, pork and beans, a slice of corned beef, oatmeal, and boiled rice, may be obtained at a cost of one cent for each item, offers the very means of carrying out this theory. What kind of 'living' could be enjoyed on that insignificant sum, is not explained by the learned experimenter; but without pushing theory to such an extreme, it is evident that a more careful and judicious outlay of small incomes would enable many unthinking persons to live well and economically, who may now deem such a thing impossible.

The use of horse-flesh as an article of food has made great progress in Paris, where about a thousand horses per week are said to be slaughtered, the animals even being imported for that purpose. It is said that during the Exhibition, the hippophagists of Paris intend giving a banquet once a month to the journalists of all nations, where horse and ass flesh prepared in every seductive form will be served up.—The snail is becoming another fashionable article of diet in France, and for some time past a particular place has been appropriated for their sale in the Paris fish-markets. Snails, says one of the French journals, were highly esteemed by the Romans, our masters in gastronomy, and are now raised in many of the

departments with success. In the sixteenth century the Capuchins of Fribourg possessed the art of fattening snails—an art not lost in our day, for in Lorraine and Burgundy they raise excellent snails, which find sure demand in the Paris market. There are now more than fifty restaurants and more than a thousand private tables in Paris where snails are accepted as a delicacy by upwards of ten thousand consumers; the monthly consumption of this mollusc being estimated at half a million. Frank Duckland tells us that snails are becoming scarce in the neighbourhood of London, where for some time snail-collecting has been a regular trade.

It is a curious fact that so many dwellings once the homes of poets should have been public-houses at one time or another. Burns's native cottage was a house of this description; the house in which Moore was born was a whisky-shop; and Shelley's house at Great Marlow, a beer-shop. Even Coleridge's residence at Nether Stowey, the very house in which the poet composed his sweet *Ode to the Nightingale*, became an ordinary beer-house. A house in which James Montgomery lived for forty years at Sheffield was a beer-shop; and the birthplace of Kirke White is now a house for retailing intoxicating beverages.

Many facts relating to foreign countries, which strike Englishmen as being curious to a degree, reach us from time to time. A Spanish soldier, we are told, will fight for a week on an empty stomach, provided he can look forward to playing his guitar on the seventh day. In his country, if a bull intended for the fight falls ill, the animal is sent to an infirmary. The chief toreador Frescoles has a fortune of two million francs; his combat costume represents one hundred thousand francs in diamonds alone; he is courted by the highest society in Madrid, is a member of the chief aristocratic club; yet his wife is a fishmonger's daughter, and still helps her mother in the market. On days when her husband performs she sits at her balcony with her children to receive couriers, who come on horseback waving a white flag as a sign of success in the arena.—The account of how a titled lady in Russia has discovered to her cost the penalties of expressing in too emphatic a manner her disapproval of her governess's behaviour, will, if true, convey a curious idea of some social customs in that country. The Princess Manveloff had a habit of striking her governess, a lady of noble birth, and the latter complained of her to the local justice. In this instance the law was a respecter of persons, and the Princess was ordered three days' detention in her own house. The governess was dissatisfied, and appealed to a higher court, which sentenced the defendant to three months' imprisonment in the common jail.—As a curious fact, it has been noted by Sir Samuel Baker that a negro has never been known to tame a wild elephant or any wild animal. The elephants employed by the ancient Carthaginians and Romans were trained by Arabs and others, never by negroes. It had often struck Sir Samuel as very distressing that the little children in Africa never had a pet animal; and though he often offered rewards for young elephants, he never succeeded in getting one alive.

A curious instance of the acquisition and rejection of fortune reaches us from New Orleans. A stableman named Pathier, belonging to an hotel in

that city, suddenly found himself heir to eighty thousand francs at the death of his mother; yet strange to say refused to accept the money. The law has in vain endeavoured to induce him to avail himself of the windfall; his only ambition is to smoke his pipe and groom the horses. To such an instance of contempt of riches it would be difficult to find a parallel.

Some curious facts from the world of Nature crop up occasionally, which are well worthy of consideration. For instance, it has been proved that the bee may under certain circumstances turn out to be anything but the pattern of industry it is proverbially supposed to furnish. Australian colonists have from time to time taken out swarms of bees to their adopted land, in the hope of deriving practical benefit from the profusion of flowers with which the whole country abounds. For some little time the newly imported bees maintained their reputation for industry, storing up their food in the comfortable hives provided for them, and supplying the colonists with far superior honey to that collected by the indigenous honey-producers the 'mellipones.' Presently, however, the hives were discovered unstocked at the end of the autumn, notwithstanding the long summers of the northern parts of Australia, and it was found that the bees entirely neglected to lay by a stock of food, as was their wont. Though the bees increased and the hives were always regularly counted, no honey was brought home. It soon became evident that, finding the perennial summer of the tropical parts of Australia afforded them abundance of food, without the intervention of long winters, the bees forsook their old habits, gave themselves up to a life of happy indolence, and no longer took the trouble to convey their superabundant supplies to the hives prepared for them. In short, there being no winters to provide for, the bees gave up the practice of storing honey.

Tenacity of life in eels and cats is proverbial; but from an instance that occurred at Flinstow Farm, near Pembroke, it appears that the pig may claim to rank with other creatures in this respect. For sixteen days a pig was missed from the farmyard, and as every search failed to discover it, the conclusion was arrived at that it had been stolen. Some masons who were repairing a brick kiln on the farm one day discovered the missing animal, which had fallen into the kiln, and was unable to extricate itself. Though all that time without food, the pig when rescued was able to eat, and did not seem much the worse for its long imprisonment.

An unexpected friend to man has been discovered in a kind of animalcule engendered by sewage, which prevents the decomposing matter from becoming a dangerous nuisance. Mr Angell, the public analyst for Hampshire, having examined the sewage-polluted fluid in Southampton Water, has discovered that where the suspended matters are thickest there is going on a silent destruction of the foul matters, through the agency of millions of the minute creatures, by some held to be of animal, but by Mr Angell believed to be of vegetable origin. On examining the muddy fluid through a microscope, it was found to contain myriads of little brown organisms, surrounded with a gelatinous substance. Each specimen was found to be active in its movements and of

peculiar shape, being furnished with a belt of cilia round the centre of the body, and with a long transparent and very flexible tail. After death, these tiny atoms give off an odour similar to that of sea-weed, and change to a green colour. During life they evolve bubbles of oxygen gas, which serve to purify the water from the effects of the decomposing matter on which they themselves feed. It is a pity, however, that man, by polluting rivers with sewage, should stand so much in need of this self-developed scavenger.

Canada, we are told, claims to have produced the largest cheese on record. It weighed seven thousand pounds, was six feet ten inches in diameter, three feet in height, and twenty-one feet in circumference; requiring one milking of seven thousand cows, or thirty-five tons of milk to produce it.—Of numerical curious facts, it may not be uninteresting to state that no less than sixteen different shades of green are understood to be patronised by the fashionable world; and that fifteen persons may dine together a billion times without sitting twice in the same relative position, by merely changing a chair at each dinner. So much for the combination of numbers.

A CURIOUS ANTIQUARIAN HOAX.

EVERY one has doubtless read *The Antiquary*, and enjoyed the skill with which the keenest archaeologist of the literary fraternity raised a laugh against his own favourite studies. The Kaim of Kinprunes and the 'A.D.L.L.' furnish the standard jest with which the Oldbucks of every future age will be assailed, and the bodle that he 'thocht was an auld coin' helps in the attack. Scotland being thus the scene of the most famous fictional story of this kind, it is curious to find it also the home of one of the best authenticated antiquarian hoaxes known to have been practised.

The story which we are about to narrate dates back to the reign of George the Third; and though now sixty years since, one of the parties to the hoax then perpetrated has just made the details of the story public in a letter read before the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland at an early meeting in the present year. The circumstances which led to the hoax being perpetrated were that, when the ruins of the eastern portion or choir of the old Abbey Church of Dunfermline were to be removed for the erection of what forms now the parish church, great anxiety was manifested to prove the truth of the statement, which, although found in the records, was to some extent believed to be doubtful, that Bruce the patriot king of Scotland was interred there. It may suffice for the purposes of the present sketch to state that the evidence that King Robert Bruce was really buried here is stated by the Rev. Peter Chalmers, in his *History of Dunfermline*, to be 'clear, varied, and strong.' Bruce died at Cardross in Dumbartonshire in 1329; and although he had confided to his faithful follower Sir James Douglas the task of conveying his heart to the Holy Land, Dunfermline was chosen by himself as his place of sepulture. Mr Chalmers quotes various entries in

the Chartulary of Dunfermline in support of this; while in Barbour's famous poem the king is spoken of as having been laid

In a fayr tumb, intill the quer.

In Fordun's *Scotichronicon* mention is also made of Bruce being interred 'in the middle of the choir' of the Abbey Church.

When the excavations were being made in 1818 for the erection of the new church, the operations were watched by many with great interest; and the Barons of Exchequer in Scotland, in whose custody were the royal palaces, &c., took some pains to secure that the remains of the king, if found, should be properly treated. Fulfilling completely the expectations entertained, a body incased in lead was found by the excavators, occupying exactly the place which the king's remains would be expected to do. It was wrapped in a double casing of lead; and some fragments of gold-embroidered linen cloth were also found, shewing that here at least was the tomb of no common person. The skeleton was that of a kingly man, six feet in height, with a splendid head, and in every way worthy of Scotland's hero. And when the body came to be examined, previous to its reinterment, it was found that the *sternum* or breast-bone had been sawn through longitudinally from top to bottom, this being the method adopted by the anatomists of the fourteenth century to reach the heart, for separate interment. This fact and the position of the body seemed to render it all but certain that the remains were those of Bruce; but still there remained a *possibility* of mistake.

It was at this point the hoax was perpetrated of which we now proceed to speak. On the exhumation of the body, it was at once returned to the earth, and the place where it was found was closed in, flat stones being placed over the aperture. The discovery was reported to the Barons of Exchequer, and excited great interest in the minds of all Scottish people of patriotic or antiquarian feelings. Considerable delay, however, was made in determining what should be done; and it was not till November 1819 that, with much ceremony, the skeleton was recoffined and reinterred. The tomb was filled up with pitch, carefully built over and inclosed, and an elaborate Latin epitaph was prepared to the effect that the interesting discovery had been made amongst the ruins of the old church, &c. But as we have said, there was a possibility of mistake; and it entered into the heads of two young men that it would be a capital thing to convince the good folk of Dunfermline that their town really did contain the body of the king. One of these was the younger brother of the architect engaged in the new church, and the other an artist comrade. Their design was to get an old or old-looking bronze plate, and after inscribing suitable characters upon it, to find some means of getting it put into the partially opened grave, so that it would be discovered on proceeding with the work. Assisted by the gentleman who now tells the story, a plate was accordingly prepared bearing a device.

When the discovery of the plate was made, its existence jumped so completely with the public

wish, that it was hailed with unquestioning and extravagant joy. So much delight was manifested and so seriously was the jest taken, that the perpetrators of it were afraid to confess what they had done.

A ludicrous incident occurred at the time. The provost of Dunfermline, a banker, sent for the artist, who joyfully waited on the chief magistrate, anticipating employment. This it was, indeed, but of unexpected and unwelcome kind, for it was to make a drawing of his own plate, for the Transactions of one of the learned societies! His heart sunk, and his hand was tremulous; and he suggested to the provost that he could make the drawing better if allowed to take the plate home. The answer was startling. Amazed at the audacity of the request, the banker said: 'I have more money in the bank just now than ever I had before; but I would rather give you the whole of it than let that plate out of my custody for an hour, until its destination is decided by the highest authorities.' So the young artist had to sit down and make the drawing afraid to hint at the 'solemn mockery' in which he was engaged. After a time suspicion fell on the plate, and it was generally believed to be a fabrication, although the details of the story were not known till now. The Rev. Mr Chalmers, whose work was published more than forty years ago, speaks of the plate as having been 'satisfactorily ascertained not to be ancient.' In Black's *Guide to Scotland*, it is stated that the plate—of the *bona fides* of which no doubt is expressed—may be seen in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries at Edinburgh. But the estimation in which this relic (which would have been priceless if genuine) was held by the Society may be judged from the statement made by the Secretary at the meeting where the above story was made public, that he had had to search for the plate in the cellar in order to exhibit it to the Fellows.

The narrator of the story of which the above is an outline is Mr John Nimmo, whose name is associated with two journals of widely different repute. A printer by trade, he left Edinburgh for Paris in the year 1821, and was for many years one of the principal employes on *Galignani*. He is now enjoying well-earned repose after a lengthy life of labour. The cause of Mr Nimmo's leaving Scotland recalls the history of a painful event, he having been the printer of the *Beacon*, a newspaper which gained unenviable notoriety by its virulent personal attacks on men obnoxious to the government of the day. The newspaper is memorable in the local history of Scotland from the tragic event in which Mr Stewart of Dunearn was engaged. Mr Stewart had endeavoured in vain to ascertain by whom the articles were written, and when the name of Mr Nimmo was given, he refused to accept him as responsible. After a while the *Beacon* was given up, and a successor of the same character was started in Glasgow. Mr Stewart discovered that some of the articles in the latter were in the handwriting of Sir Alexander Boswell, the eldest son of Johnson's biographer. He challenged Sir Alexander; and in the duel which ensued the latter was mortally wounded; and Mr Stewart, who was subsequently tried for the offence, was acquitted. The fact that Mr Nimmo did not return to Scotland for many years after the perpetration of the hoax in which he was concerned, and that then

he found the question, if not forgotten, certainly exciting no interest, may explain why he has only now made public, in a letter to an old friend in Edinburgh, the above curious story.

VILLAGE VETERANS.

WE are somewhat proud of the number of hale old people in our village, the salubrity of which outsiders are apt to question, on account of its proximity to the Fens. No doubt age is still known amongst us in some degree; but the intending visitor who for that reason equips himself with stores of quinine, evinces just such an exaggerated dread as that which inspired Dr Johnson to provide himself with pistols on his memorable journey to the Highlands. Our death-rate is quite within the average, and longevity is one of our strong points. We must admit of course that many of our veterans are placed rather early on the list by rheumatism or asthma; but it is astonishing how long they contrive to continue there in spite of coughs and stiff joints. We keep a mental register of them one and all, know each of them personally, and take a lively interest in their condition, as becomes a parish doctor. There is an additional zest to our observations in the marked individualities amongst them, which a protracted village life has always a tendency to produce; but over and above local and professional pride in their length of years and the pleasure which mere character-study yields, there are certain general and loftier human grounds on which we might excuse a few remarks regarding our village veterans.

One sunny spot hard by the southern wall of the old bridge forms the favourite haunt of the old men in fine weather. There they muster in strength on the balmy summer mornings, and there the harder of them forget their whenever there is a blisk of sunshine.

Most of them walk by the aid of two sticks, the palest amongst them requiring the assistance of at least one, and on these they lean as they rest their backs against the warm red-brick wall. It is curious to note the heartiness of their morning greetings, and the 'I'm bravely, thank ye,' with which an octogenarian doubled up with suffering will answer the challenge as to his health. Their next task is to compare notes as to the past night's experience, this mutual review of coughs and other specific ailments being often couched in phrases more quaint than elegant; as when dear old Jenny Baxter said to his listener the other day, 'Dash my wig, if I didn't think I wor agoin' to die.' Then follows much babbling of olden times, of strange things which happened when they were hale and hearty, of the sacks of corn they could carry, of the acres they could reap, of the hard work and big pay they had when the great drains were making, and not unsmell of the merry-makings and junketings of half a century ago. Or they talk with a keenness of interest, sally suggestive, of the event of the day, be it the arrival of a new steam-plough or the latest twin-birth in the parish. Sometimes a scrap of news from the great world without, falls among them—a great shipwreck, a fresh battle, or a general

election—and sets them agog with wonder and curiosity.

Old age, like most other inevitable things, is a great leveller, and our group sometimes consists of individuals who have held very various positions in life. The chief spokesman and referee in all matters of gossip is an old man-of-war sailor. He has many a tale to tell of 'board ship, but is best known as the village Zadkiel; a title given, we fancy, in derision rather than flattery. He has been every inch a seaman, and is even yet a good type of an old salt, in spite of rheumatism and crutches. The other veterans have for the most part been farm-labourers; some have been mechanics; several innkeepers and tradesmen; and one or two have been farmers in a small way. All now meet, however, on the common ground of age and infirmity. Old Dalboys, at one time the hectoring farmer of Longley, smokes the pipe of equality with Tommy Hill, whom for thirty years he had bullied as his horse-tender; while the superannuated schoolmaster gossips amicably with his ancient enemy the now retired sexton. They have buried old grudges, feuds, and animosities under that wall with the sunny southern exposure, as thoroughly as they must in any case do ere long under the chill walls of the old churchyard. No doubt they have their little childish jealousies still, but these are of a fresh growth. Sam Payne and Bill Shipley are both fond of the easy position afforded by the obtuse angle of a bend in the wall, and grumble a little when the other contrives to secure it. Occasionally John Shore, in the pride of his practical knowledge, will make a stir in the camp by doggedly disputing such a statement as that London lies north-east of Cambridge. At times, too, Billie Wright, who we fear is the butt of these veteran schoolboys, will totter off in dudgeon, because, being no smoker himself, some of the more vivacious of his mates get on the weather-side of him with their pipes. But these tiffs are harmless and ephemeral, and one can well afford to smile at and forget them in view of the genuine friendship and good-will that prevail.

There is, by the way, a certain hour on a certain day of every week—Wednesday, we believe—which never fails to bring a number of our veterans to the old bridge, wet or dry, cloud or sunshine, westling wind or downright nor-easter. On such occasions they have company in the shape of a limited number of widows, most of them also well up in years, who, let us remark, deserve a full share of whatever sympathy we may be disposed to grant to our cronies of the other sex. The occasion of this special weekly gathering is one which a stranger would consider eminently sad and painful. They are waiting to receive their dole from the relieving officer, who, having many districts to visit, and no sheltered stations at any of them, is compelled to perform his interesting duty in the open air. The poor old souls, especially in bad weather, look anxiously down the road for the appearance of the gig and gray pony which conveys their 'father, as, with a kind of grim humour, they have styled the official. Knowing them as we do, however, and their general cheerfulness and contentment, we are not disposed to claim any undue commiseration for their lot in this respect. The distressing side of such a scene presents itself to the reflecting onlooker rather

than to themselves. They have drifted gradually—in almost every case be it said by sheer stress of circumstances—into the condition of outdoor paupers, and their wants have vanished one by one with the decrease of their means. Besides, none of them is altogether dependent on the parochial allowance. One has several grandchildren who earn a little; another has a married daughter who struggles to spare a trifle; and a third has a wife, younger and stronger than himself, who goes out as nurse or charwoman; while all of them are the objects of many small kindnesses at the hands of their better-off and sympathetic neighbours. Their actual aliment indeed contrasts favourably with that of several others, whose pinched incomes, derived from their own savings, place them outside the pale of both public and private charity.

The humble annals of some veterans of the latter class are, when rightly read, the record of doughty deeds, of amazing fortitude, and unwavering self-respect. Their old age is beset with petty cares that might daunt the hearts of younger men and women. Some are entirely alone in the world, having outlived kith and kin. They have to pinch and scrape, in the sternest and least lovely sense of that phrase, to make ends meet. Their daily anxiety is to keep out of debt; a dinner here and a supper there are ceded in the struggle, but there is no thought of surrender while life lasts. One old lady (we use the title advisedly, although she is only the widow of a jobbing carpenter) is now in her eighty-second year. She has buried all her family except one son, who is the village scapegrace and a sad thorn in his mother's side. The cottage she occupies is her own; but her entire income from several other small properties is, when cleared of charges, only some seventeen pounds a year. She has no word of complaint to make, however, and her philosophy may be summed up in the few words she said to us the other day: 'I am hearty for my years, sir. I have been able to pay my way all along and, God willing, I shall to the end. My only trouble is about Harry, and who knows but he may alter yet?' Brave old heart and brave old comrades, who thus stand firm and undaunted in the last assault of the world and its cares!

But whatever their lot and whatever claim some may have to special interest and regard, the mere fact that they are all veterans in the great human array, entitles them without distinction to the sympathy of a younger generation. What need to pry too closely into their careers? To what purpose the reflection, that this one or that one did not acquit himself according to the strict standards of thrift, prudence, or perseverance? Let us accept the helplessness of age, which may have been reached through failures and weaknesses, in the same tender spirit that we do the helplessness of childhood, whose inherent weaknesses are yet untried. They are all under the wall now whose shadow lengthens across their forms in the setting of the sun. May the light of human sympathy also linger with them to the end, till veteran after veteran has quitted the old bridge for his long home, and his earthly haunts know him no more.

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PIXY-LED.

In the deep green lanes of leafy Devonshire, and over its broad heaths and moors, there are (as we had occasion to shew in a recent sketch) still pixies to be found by those who believe in them; as there are yet 'the little folk'—'the good people'—in the remotest parts of Scotland, leprechauns in Ireland, and *les dames blanches* in France. And still, as in olden time, poor dazed mortals are pixy-led;—fascinated, like the victims of the Sirens of old, by the songs which to others are but as the sighing of the wind among the reeds, but which to them are divinest music, full of lovely promises and of fairest visions. To them that handful of withered leaves is a mass of shining gold; and Ribeszahl, now a gnome of the mines and now a charcoal-burner of the mountains, is followed without question or suspicion when he poses for Apollo or offers himself as Alexander. The old old times, when fairy Melusines were women by day and snakes by night—when demon lovers abounded, and men and maidens lost their souls for eyes too bright to be true—are still repeated in the circumstances of to-day; and to one under the spell of the pixies, old age is youth, ugliness is beauty, and sordid meanness is magnanimity and goodness. The subtle enchantment of glamour is thrown over every part of life; and, like gardens seen in dreams, where the flowers of spring and the fruits of autumn grow side by side on the same branch, those touched with elfin fingers see things which never existed and as they never existed; enriching with the wealth of their own fancy natures left dowerless by genius, by beauty, by grace; exalting mediocrity into the high place of excellence—like the godhead once worshipped in a bull and revered in a hawk.

A man lies at the feet of a vitalised machine, a living doll—a talking marionette—whom he idealises as the crowned grace of womanhood, just as Titania before him idealised the ass's head of her Gentle Joy. He sees nothing in its true light, but, pixy-led, hears only the sweet poem of his own love, knows only the magic beauty

of his own creation. Where others gauge the vulgar selfishness of a commonplace schemer who has weighed her chances and her advantages in the scales together, and has decided on accepting him and his title and his banker's book as the best that she can do for herself, he declares to be unfathomable the sweet reticence of her modesty, the saintly devotion of her gentle heart, given to him so generously for love's sake only. Stolidity is dignity and stupidity repose; a fatuous smile is the expression of her inherent sweetness; levity is light-heartedness; frivolity good-humour; the flirtations, which are patent to the world at large and food for all the circle to discuss, are the natural liking of a pretty woman for an innocent admiration which is as naturally her due; the delicacy of health, which others know as a mere blind—used now as an excuse for self-indulgent indolence, now as the assigned reason for a retirement not always wisely employed—is to him, pixy-led, an incessant spur to his pity, to his fear, to his devotion. Blinded as he is, even when she neglects her children for her pleasure—for the idle play that she calls her work—and for the coarser personal ambition which she calls a cause—he reverences her as a leader, of society or otherwise, doing her duty to herself and to others; a creature too full of intellectual power and genius to be confined to the four narrow walls of home; and he thinks that a hired nurse and paid governess can do all for the little ones which is necessary, and at less expenditure of fine material. This is the lover and husband pixy-led; and who can open his eyes?

The mother who adores her handsome, plausible, scampish son; who accepts his boastings as if they were so many announcements in the Gazette; and to whom the significant fact that the splendour of his self-reported career never consolidates into public recognition or tangible fortune, conveys nothing but a sense of the injustice of Fate and the crossness of circumstance—what is she but pixy-led, the magic herb that has blinded her being, her maternal love? She believes in her scamp as other folks believe in the Gospel; credits

all his wild romances about his past and his present, of which she had no more proof than the courtiers had of their king's magic wind-woven garments; and makes no doubt, raises no question as to the certain fortune that awaits him—put on paper as a sum; and figures you know cannot lie!—if only she will trust him with his sisters' portion and her own jointure. She places herself and her daughters unreservedly in his hands; and though others know that her fairy palace is only a hill-side mound of earth and rubbish—her golden tables and delicious fruits nothing but 'agaricus and fungi with mildew and mould'—and the noble music by which she is bewitched, the shrill screechings of a 'seranmel pipe'—yet to her the cheat is true; and, pixy-blinded, pixy-led as she is, probably remains true to the end. For even when the inevitable crash comes, and all these rainbow hopes of glittering success pass away into the dark clouds of ruin and despair, even then she clings to her faith in her boy as a devotee clings to the image of her god; and is so certain that, either all will come right in the end or, if that is impossible, then that it was not his fault. If this had happened, or that had not happened—things impossible to foresee and as impossible to control—the rainbow would never have faded away and they would have built their palace under its arch. How was he to blame if facts were too strong for him, and fortune was not to be wooed or won? So she argues, influenced by the 'good people' who delude her with their false shows and fair-spoken words; making use of one of the holiest feelings of human nature to bring about her sorrow, and using one of the sweetest attributes of womanhood to compass ruin.

If we are pixy-led by our affections, how much more by our passions and our fancies! What after all is that thirst for fame, which goes under the name of ambition, but a delusion created by the Fucks and the Rützezahls of the unseen fairy-world that is about us? What is that craze for 'success' but the same thing? A man gives all that makes life worth having for the name of having succeeded in his career. He toils through youth, maturity, and into old age, and then he plants his foot on that final rung of the ladder where he has coveted to stand:—he buys that special property; holds that special office; is invested with that one long-desired dignity:—And all for what? To totter through the few frail years still left to him, and from which hard work and harder living have taken all savour. Broken in health, how can he, barring certain notable exceptions, enjoy those good things which he gave that health and his manhood to attain? Hardened in heart by the friction and the fight, how can he know the happiness which springs from participation, from sympathy, wherein lies the only true happiness of man? His mind narrowed by long compression in one groove, can he, at his age, learn the delights of art, the glory of science, the solace of literature? He has been

following the pixy who promised him Success; and the imp has kept her word. But the curse which lies in fairy gold is repeated even in the fulfilment; and when the endowment is made, the power of profiting by it is gone. For all the purposes of wealth, that pyramid of gold might as well be only a mass of withered forest-leaves.

The woman who sacrifices the gallant fellow whom she loves for the man whom she does not love, because the one has as many thousands as that other has hundreds, is she not pixy-led?—to be landed before long in the worst Slough of Despond to be found in the whole tract of human life! And the man who gives up his sweet young love, with beauty a true heart and a noble nature for her only dower, to marry instead that hard-faced woman with her dazzling jointure and her evil heart—is he not also pixy-led to his own substantial ruin if seeming success? Where love is the unswerving star set for guidance in the heavens, money and ambition are the torches waved by the flitting pixies over the morass—we know with what result to those who follow! So with honour in a ragged mantle instead of chicanery in cloth of gold; so with truth pelted in the pillory instead of falsehood set in high places; so with all the true and noble things of life, whatever their outside reception, instead of the apparent glitter of what men call success, and the soul knows to be death.

Pixy-led by superstitious fancies, now of things and now of persons, we are as often the slaves of seeming as the believers in truths. All the crazy beliefs which have turned the steady-going world of intellect upside down, and substituted for realities the merest nightmares—when they are not day-dreams—are of the nature of things pixy-led. There are people who believe in the secret police as a power defying the house-door key and penetrating into private dwellings from basement to garret. And there are people who believe in secret poisonings and the presence in our midst of murderers in dress coats and white kid gloves—men who have done to death their wives and sisters and friends—it maybe even their mothers—when they will gain so much by the quiet removal of these poor creatures, apparently loved and tended while in reality murdered—but men whom neither society suspects nor the law can touch. What is all this but pixy-led belief?—a mere phantasy founded on nothing, without proof, foundation, or argument. None the less there are hundreds who believe implicitly in these two things—the universal overlooking of the secret police, and the prevalence of undetected poisoning among respectable families over whom the shadow of crime has apparently never passed.

It is the same kind of thing, inverted, when people give credence to certain statements, which if true will be their salvation, but which have neither proof nor warranty. They believe because they are told—never mind who the teller or how unlikely the tale; just as to say, 'I read it in a book'—'I saw it in the newspaper,' is the clincher to them of all trustworthiness. You will make your fortune by such and such a scheme; a fortune to be had only for the lifting and at very little risk. So whisper the pixies, singing low and sweet to the

ear of credulity, under the guise of a sharp-faced man who has been 'something in the City' for all his life, though he never seems to have brought much out of it. What says the common-sense of experience on the other side? Would that fortune have been left for you to pick up if those who shew it you could have gained it for themselves? Would the finder, the pioneer, the displayer thereof—he the ragged robin notoriously impecunious and out at elbows—be such a philanthropist as to give away what he needs so greatly, for the mere pleasure of doing a kind thing to a comparative stranger? Pixy sings with its sweet seductive tenor for the one part, and common-sense puts in its controlling bass for the other; but the flattering imp too often wins the day, and reason retires shivering and sad, rebuked and rebuffed!

Pixy-led by our hopes and our fears, our passions and our affections, so are we by our tastes. The men who ruin themselves for horses and hounds, for pictures and *bric-à-brac*, for gardens and fancy fowls;—they have poor relations—nieces who are making their own living, young, tender, delicate; sisters who are sitting desolate among the cold ashes of the ruined hearth: but the uncle and the brother wastes his clear thousands over toys, and thinks himself blessed when he has got hold of an unintelligible dab, god-fathered to a famous painter, or a bit of cracked porcelain sworn to by the dealer as unique.

Pixy-led by our senses we spend our strength like our substance in pleasure and flood our brains with drink that we may live in a fool's paradise half our time and a real hades for the next half. Pixy-led by our ignorance we accept the appearance of things for their substance and knock our heads against the walls by which we are surrounded, determined not to learn their real properties. Thus we seek to exorcise the murderous diseases of men, moral as well as physical, by muttered charms and potent talismans, rather than by tracing the cause in its course—barring the roots—and thus learning how best to extirpate them. But we content ourselves with sighing at the hard necessities of Fate; and, wrapping ourselves up in a false cloak of religion, we say that the Father of Men and the God of Love has laid on us these terrible scourges that we may learn patience under suffering; while shutting our eyes to the fact that with every poison is an antidote and that every evil has its remedy. Pixy-led by our fears we create the sorrows that we dread, and live in a world of misery fashioned by our self-tormenting hands. How many time-honoured beliefs and cherished ideas are only fancies and superstitions without base or substance—how many beloved things are utterly without value, and beautiful creatures mere pixy cheats if only we could open our eyes and see! Oh! if ever the reign of truth, clear, bright, unmistakable truth, comes on this sad earth of ours, what a heap of dead bones which now seem to have life would fall together—what enchantment of the pixies would be at an end! The gold that now we cherish would be turned to rubbish to which we would not give harbourage; and the things which we now believe to be rubbish would prove themselves of purest gold throughout. Among our most earnest prayers may be inserted that of deliverance from the charms and magic spells of the pixies—in other words, deliverance from vain

imaginings and false beliefs; from baseless hope and causeless fear; the restless doubt of an unproved suspicion, and the blind faith which accepts because it wishes, and believes because it desires.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—IN WOOLMER FOREST.

'BEATEN, decidedly beaten, bad luck to thee! The only chance Sir David has left is to slip off in the night, grope for a ford higher up the stream, and pass his artillery over as best he may. I could lay a wager that he tries it.'

'Not he,' returned a gruffer voice. 'Moffat's too wary to be caught napping. The sly old fox was almost too many for us though, when he made that forced march, and all but captured the bridge by a swoop of his cavalry.'

'Ah!' chimed in a third officer of the group now eating a hurried supper around a bivouac fire, the glow of which was doubly welcome from the fact that the uniforms of all present had been drenched and soaked with the heavy rain that had fallen that day.—'Ah! tell it not in Gath; but it was the quickness of those militia fellows—the Devon Light Infantry, or whatever they call themselves—that saved us. The enemy's cavalry were just clattering over the bridge, when that militia regiment threw out its skirmishers, in very smart style too, and saved the chief from a checkmate.'

'That was Harrogate's doing,' observed the first speaker; 'he's their acting-major just now, and I saw him on horseback at the bridge-foot. A first-rate fellow he is, and could teach a lesson to some of our pompous bigwigs in cocked-hat and feather. All the same, I'd not work as he does, if I were a lord.'

'You had better leave off chattering, you youngsters, and get forty winks,' said the good-natured senior with the gruff voice. 'It's ten to one Moffat has us under arms and on the march a good hour before daybreak. I learned his ways in India, when we were following Tanta Topce and the Nana up hill and down dale. As for me, I've the rounds to-night, and— Well, sergeant; what is it?' he asked, as he tightened his belt.

'A civilian, sir, that wants to be passed to the quarters of an officer of the Devon militia, on important business, he says. He has come in a gig from Downton, and the picket stopped him on the Whiteparish road.'

'It's a spy of old Sir David's!' exclaimed one of the subalterns, jumping to his feet; 'one of the enemy in plain clothes sent to reconnoitre within our lines. I suppose it wouldn't quite do to hang him, though!'

'A Loudon tailor, more likely,' said another of the young men, with a laugh. 'Too bad, I call it, to be dunned down here, and pestered with bills, when one is wearing out one's clothes and wetting one's feet in the service of an ungrateful country.—What sort of man is he, sergeant?'

'A sailor-looking fellow, sir—from abroad, I should judge—dressed very respectable,' returned the sergeant, again lifting his hand to the peak of his cap. 'It's Lord Harrogate he wants to see—on particular business, he says.'

There was some little discussion as to whether the stranger should be allowed to proceed. Strictly

speaking, every British subject has a right to go where he lists, within the four seas, upon a lawful errand; but there are exceptions to this abstract right, in practice, if not in theory. This was one of them. The Autumn Manœuvres were going on, and two generals of great Indian renown, Sir David Roberts, and Lord Moffat, but lately promoted to the peerage on account of his long and good service, were pitted against one another in that larger *Kriegspiel* or game of war which we call a sham campaign.

Sir David commanded the 'enemy,' and his business was to get within striking distance of London, if his strategy should prove superior to that of his old comrade and rival. He was supposed to have landed a powerful foreign force at Poole, Weymouth, or Christchurch, and now to be pushing vigorously on, scattering the local levies as he came towards the capital. It was Lord Moffat's more popular task to defend London and beat back the invader to his ships.

There had been much marching and counter-marching. The forces employed, men and officers alike, had entered into the mimic contest with the heartiness of so many schoolboys intent upon their play. Their willing obedience knew no bounds. When the commissariat—as is the nature of commissariats—was behind-hand with their food, they marched, dinnerless, and bore cheerfully every hardship that dust, rain, hunger, and fatigue could inflict. The men disguised their footsore condition that the regiment might have full ranks when the mock-fight should come. The officers scarcely grumbled over the heavy bills which the spoiling of their new uniforms entailed.

Lord Moffat, the national defender, to the great joy of his army and the delight of the newspaper correspondents, was getting the best of it. But the wily Sir David and his invading hordes had been within an ace, if not of victory, at least of that upper hand which goes far in sham war as in real war. By a stolen flank-march he had all but captured the only available bridge across the Lene, on the swift stream and deep though narrow channel of which his veteran antagonist had relied perhaps a little too implicitly.

Sir David's Hussars and Lancers had come charging down upon the feebly guarded bridge across the Lene, unexpectedly, when every one in Lord Moffat's camp believed them to be miles away. Five minutes more of panic and indecision would have given up to the 'enemy' the hill-road that skirted the downs, and led direct to Aldershot and London. Luckily, the militia regiment posted nearest to the river was in a state of unusually stringent discipline, and had in Lord Harrogate an officer who could be cool and firm at a moment's warning. The skirmishers of the regiment of which he was now acting-major had lined the bank with magical quickness, and the battalion had come swiftly on to pour blank-cartridge into the hostile squadrons. Horse, foot, and guns had come to the help of the men of Devon, and Sir David's daring onslaught had been repulsed.

All this sounds very childish, possibly, to those who, at a distance from the scene of strife, only read of it through the cold medium of printed words. But to those who took part in the fray and were all on fire with the keen contagion of the excitement, it was very real. So many stratagems were

reputed to be in use for the obtaining of information, so much of the success of either friendly belligerent must depend on secrecy as to his movements, that it is no wonder if a stranger was regarded with extreme suspicion when presenting himself at the outposts.

Had this stranger asked for a less popular officer than Lord Harrogate, it is probable that he would have met with every conceivable impediment in the further prosecution of his researches. But, apart from that shadowy halo of respect which, as such still surrounds those born in the purple, Lord Harrogate was a man never named but with respect, and on account of his service at the bridge was the hero of the hour.

'I'll take him with me as far as the post of the Devon militia,' said the gruff field-officer, who had now completed the tightening of his belt and the adjustment of his cloak. 'My orderly must look after him, sergeant.'

Lord Harrogate, in the act of receiving the reports for the night, with some surprise beheld Richard Hold, master-mariner, marched up under escort to the door of his hastily pitched tent. He knew the man at once. That sallow, swarthy countenance had attracted some notice in the quiet Devonshire country-side near High Tor.

'You want me, then, it seems, Mr'—began the future Earl of Wolverhampton.

'Hold, my lord! Dick Hold, very much at your service!' returned the seaman, 'if these men'—with a half-anxious glance at the file of militia privates to left and right, and the pink-faced young corporal who, stiff as a ramrod, commanded the guard—'would give a fellow breathing-time.'

At a sign from Lord Harrogate, the escort fell back, and Richard Hold was at liberty to speak. 'Did your lordship ever hear what happens to a pig when he swins?' asked the seaman abruptly; and without giving his auditor leisure to reply to the queer question, he resumed: 'He cuts his throat, they say; and so do I, maybe, in speaking as I'm going to do. I've been paid for silence until it goes agin me to speak, even to spoil the game of one who hasn't used me well.'

Lord Harrogate, smiling, looked steadily at the man, and read a good deal of his character at a glance.

'Vain, shrewd, boastful, and a bully;' such was his rapid summary of Hold's qualities; 'but with a stout heart to back his bullying, which is not a common conjunction. The fellow must be smarting under some sense of injury, or he would not be here.'

He saw too that Mr Hold was in that peculiar condition as to the effects of liquor which police constables delicately define when they say that the prisoner at the bar 'had been drinking, but was not tipsy.'

Now, no suspicion that the stranger was even flustered by drink had entered the minds of his late military custodians, or he would never have been admitted within the pickets. Hold, when questioned before, had seemed as sober as a Good Templar. There is, however, as men of the world know, such a thing as latent intoxication, precisely as there is such a thing as latent heat; and even such a seasoned vessel as Richard Hold may suddenly, under excitement, feel the staggering effects of brandy swallowed hours ago.

'It was on business, I think, that you had to speak to me?' said Lord Harrogate cheerfully.

'Business, I guess, can be of more sorts than one,' rapped out the seaman argumentatively. 'To reeve a rope for a rogue's neck is one sort o' business; and to dinker on the irons of the chain-gang at Perth, W. A., or Bermuda, or Gib (I've seen the convicts most everywhere; though, mind ye, I never wore the Queen's canary-suit), is another. Rough customers are most of those that get a sentence of penal servitude. It's on a gentleman—say on Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet—the punishment falls the heaviest.'

'What do you mean? Or by what right do you drag the name of a landed gentleman of high position into your rambling talk?' asked Lord Harrogate, very sternly.

Hold, as though the young man's severe demeanour had excited instead of sobering him, broke into a crowing laugh of scorn. 'That meaty-mouthed hypocrite!' he exclaimed; 'and he, forsooth, is a gentleman of high position, to play skipper to my swabber, I suppose, though I've more pluck in my little finger than Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet, has in his whole body. It isn't to a poor young thing—and she a widow and a lady—I'd owe a grudge, and still less to an innocent baby-girl that had no more harmed him than—' If it were all to come over again, I'm as certain as I stand here that I'd have gone to that young Lady Harrogate herself, and said '—

Something here seemed to flit across Hold's clouded mind, for he started, bit his lip, and became silent.

'Did you know that young Lady Harrogate of whom you have made mention, and who has been long dead?' asked Lord Harrogate encouragingly.

'Maybe I did, and maybe I didn't,' grudgingly returned Richard, whose vein of communicativeness no longer flowed freely. 'I've had sunstroke, mister, and knocks on the head too, on the topsy-turvy side of the world, that ought to excuse me if I talk a bit wild when I get liquor aboard. I'm Jack Ashore. Nobody minds a sailor.'

It was in vain that Lord Harrogate plied him with questions. A change had come over the man's mood, and his dogged caution was as prominent as had lately been his garrulous bravado. It was evident that he regretted his recent avowal, and that being unable to recall it, he would say no more. Then came muffled noises from without, a single low roll of the drum, and the passing of the word from man to man.

'The brigade to which you are attached, Lord Harrogate, is to get under arms and march at once,' said an aide-de-camp, putting his head into the canvas doorway of the tent. "'Quick and silent," are Lord Moffat's orders.'

'You must make your mind up, Mr Hold,' said the young lord, as he caught up his sword and buckled it on, 'as to whether you prefer to speak, or to have had your journey for nothing.'

The master-mariner shook his head sullenly. 'You titted swells back one another, right or wrong,' he muttered querulously. 'A plain man like me might have known it.'

'I back nobody in wrong, for my poor part,' replied Lord Harrogate, as he made his hasty preparations for a start. His soldier-servant was already aiding a couple of privates to strike the tent.

'I don't believe you do, my lord!' exclaimed Hold irresolutely; 'you don't fly false colours at the main, whoever does. If you knew that a girl, as noble in blood as yourself, was robbed of her rights, and made to pass for a mere nobody's child, in the very place that '—

'Harrogate, the colonel only waits for you!' cried the breathless adjutant, as he stood panting at the door. Without, was heard the steady tramp of marching feet and the rattle of arms.

'One moment, Vicers!' said Lord Harrogate.—'You see, Mr Hold, go I must. Will you give me some address, at which this conversation can be renewed?'

Almost mechanically, Dick drew out one of the cards of Old Plunger's.

'I'll look you up there,' cried Lord Harrogate, as he darted out into the night. Then came the smothered sound of voices, as the words of command were given, and then the regular hurried tramp of many feet. The brigade had marched, leaving Mr Richard Hold to regain his gig, his railway station, and ultimately London, as best he might.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—AT BUNDELCUND MANSIONS.

'I will take your card in to Mr Sturgis, sir. I don't know, I'm sure, about his being well enough to see you; but perhaps you'll please to wait,' said the tall, prim, grim parlour-maid who acted as janitress of the front-door of a slack-baked villa at Putney, one of twin villas, which were called—at the express desire of the inhabitant of the other one, old Colonel Chutnee, H.E.I.C.S.—Bundelcund Mansions. They were capacious villas these, as might be argued from the grandiloquent name that had been fathered upon them; and they had pleasant gardens, with shaven turf, weeping-willows, and azalea beds in the first style of suburban gardening, sloping down to the river at the gentle curve of Putney Reach.

No. 1 Bundelcund Mansions belonged, so far as lease and furniture went, to Colonel Chutnee; No. 2 Bundelcund Mansions, to Ebenezer Sturgis, Esq., retired from the practice of law. Lord Harrogate, who was the visitor-expectant at the ex-lawyer's outer portals, had often heard of Mr Sturgis, as having been formerly solicitor to that young Baroness Harrogate who had been so unfortunate as wife and mother, and to his own father the Earl; but he had never seen Mr Sturgis.

The Aldershot Autumn Manœuvres were over, the troops dispersed, and the victory of Lord Moffat over Sir David Roberts—hard won, and much trumpeted by the newspapers, whose correspondents had accompanied the respective staffs of the belligerent generals—was already as much forgotten by the public as the shreds of cartridge-case that lay strewn among the Wessex stubble-fields. Lord Harrogate had time now to attend to the queer business broached by that respectable person, Mr Richard Hold.

'Master will see you, sir—my lord,' said the grim, prim parlour-maid, dropping a flurried courtesy, in acknowledgment of the rank of the visitor, as she returned. 'Only you must please walk into the garden. He's mostly there in the fine weather.'

Hard by the water's edge, in a leafy arbour, overrun with American creepers, with the morning

newspapers neatly arranged upon a table beside him, and a long slender fishing-rod lying on the turf within reach, was Mr Sturgis, a little nervous-mannered, trimly attired old gentleman, who shaded his eyes with one thin white hand, and then held it out in salutation.

'You've a De Vere face, my lord,' he said, rising from his chair. 'A boy you were, a boy, when I saw you last. But I have known so many of the name.'

Mr Sturgis was deaf; and it was through the serpentine tube of an ear-trumpet that Lord Harrogate had to explain the object of his visit. He wished, he said, that Mr Sturgis would so far oblige him as to recall his recollections of the time when Clare, Baroness Harrogate, lost that only child who would in due course have succeeded her in the title that had now lapsed to the Wolverhampton line. Was it not true—a proper explanation should be forthcoming as to the reason for the inquiry—that Mr Sturgis had been at the late Lady Harrogate's cottage-residence, beside the Thames, on the very day of the child's drowning? Was it not also true that there were some suspicions of foul play?

The little old lawyer fidgeted very much with his yellow silk pocket-handkerchief, his gold-rimmed spectacles, and a tiny gold snuff-box that lay on the table at his elbow, before he returned any answer to these questions. 'Poor young thing! poor young creature!' he said at last. 'Yes; I was there. I attended her ladyship in Berkshire, there, at her request, to see to the proper execution of some legal documents relating to the trifling property her late husband the Colonel had left behind him; and within a few minutes of my reaching Holly Cottage, the accident occurred. Ah, to be sure! It was sad, very sad!'

'You speak of it, I perceive, as an accident?' said Lord Harrogate interrogatively. 'There were reports, I believe, to the contrary?'

'Why, yes,' replied Mr Sturgis, in a slow reluctant tone. 'The vulgar, your lordship knows, like a spice of the marvellous, especially when a death is in question, and there were ugly rumours flying about—soon hushed up and forgotten, though.'

'Do you imagine that there was any substratum of solid truth underlying these rumours?' asked Lord Harrogate through the trumpet.

'Now, my dear sir—my dear lord—that's a leading question,' said the little lawyer argumentatively, and laying one weak hand on his visitor's coat-sleeve. 'What we have to deal with, as men of business and men of the world, are first facts, and then probabilities. The case *prima facie* was a very simple one. Child, of tender years, left alone on terrace overlooking river—scream heard—infant's body vainly sought for in the Thames—a very melancholy but commonplace concatenation of circumstances. Nothing but the rank of the parties called attention to the misfortune.'

'And yet, Mr Sturgis, you do not believe that things passed in this commonplace, everyday fashion?' said Lord Harrogate.

'*Argumentum ad hominem*, my lord—*argumentum ad*—Ah! whissah!' exclaimed Mr Sturgis, tottering to his feet and flourishing his arms like an insane semaphore—'whissah! you bloodthirsty animal!'

And as he spoke, he flung a short cudgel, that lay concealed among the leafy walls of the arbour, into a clump of rose-bushes a few yards distant. A large cat, seared by the hostile demonstration, scuttled hastily towards the boundary-wall, leaped into a tree, and regaining the neutral ground of the brickwork, turned, with arching back and swollen tail, and glared at its human enemy.

'One of old Chutnee's cats—the Colonel's cats; Persians, he calls them; but they are neither deaf nor white, so that's all nonsense—after my pigeons!' explained Mr Sturgis. 'I saw the brindled monster, the same that robbed me of two pretty fantails and a pouter, stealing like a tigerkin through the bushes. Most encroaching, unprincipled, odious, old fellow is that neighbour of mine. I wish he were back with his sepoys. I wish he had stopped in that detestable Bundelcund, the heathenish name of which he was pigheaded enough to get painted on this house of mine, as if I, of all people, were a Qui Hi, like himself.'

'Uncongenial tastes,' said Lord Harrogate, smiling, 'must detract a great deal from the pleasures of good neighbourhood.'

'Good neighbourhood indeed!' cried Mr Sturgis irritably. 'I might as well be cheek-by-jowl with a Pindharry or a Dacoo, or any other of the outlandish robbers that the Colonel spent such part of his life in hunting as he could spare from billiards and bitter beer and brandy pawnee. It's not only his cats—it's everything! His very hookah, in which he smokes rascally eastern drugs, to which tobacco is harmless, poisons the air. He trespasses on everything. He ground-baits for fish until the dace in the river turn up their noses at paste or gentle. He lets long lines, all over hooks, trail down the current, entangling the tackle of other anglers. There's nothing, really nothing, of which that red-faced Half-pay is not capable, and until he dies of apoplexy, there will be no comfort for me!'

It was evident that there was a standing feud between the man of war and the man of peace. It cost Lord Harrogate some trouble to divert the ex-lawyer's mind from Colonel Chutnee and his misdoings to his own reminiscences as to that sad little episode that had been enacted years before at Holly Cottage. And it proved impossible to pin so slippery a witness to the point as concerned his own impressions with respect to the cause of the catastrophe. Mr Sturgis was one of those casuists who have been blessed, or the reverse, with that peculiarly legal intellect which takes delight in the niceties of mental straw-splitting, and the edge of which is too fine for the practical work of this rough-and-ready world. He was timid too, and nervously reluctant—having the fear of the law of libel perpetually before his eyes, wherever Colonel Chutnee was not the subject of discourse—to speak his mind. Nevertheless, Lord Harrogate gathered from the ex-solicitor's guarded talk that the speaker's delicately balanced opinion inclined towards the hypothesis that there had been something wrong. It was singular that the poor little thing's body had never been recovered. Men had been dragging, dragging night and day; and not the river Thames alone, but every creek, backwater, weir, and pool had been examined within miles. That the infant had been murdered, was a supposition grossly improbable. It was no one's interest to make away with the heiress of a barren

title. Kidnapping was, under the circumstances, almost as unlikely as murder. Gipsies, credited in popular belief with such offences, had never been taxed with stealing a child too young to beg, and who would therefore be useless to the strolling tribe. Nor would the lithest Zingari be bold and deft enough to venture on a theft so audacious, so difficult, and so unprofitable.

Yet, though Mr Sturgis glibly enumerated all the grounds on which a verdict of 'Accidental drowning' might be returned by a coroner's jury, Lord Harrogate felt more and more convinced that the little lawyer in his heart of hearts believed that something was amiss.

'Rumours were afloat at the time,' said Lord Harrogate; 'and unless I am greatly mistaken, inquiries were made!'

Mr Sturgis assented. 'Idle tongues wagged,' he said, 'in various circles of society; and we sifted, as was our duty—I speak of myself and of my esteemed coadjutors, Messrs Pounce and Pontifex—much loose gossip, and found a residuum of—nothing. There was much assertion, but not an iota of proof.'

However, at the close of the interview, Mr Sturgis hospitably pressed on his visitor a glass of old Madeira.—'Very rare, my lord, existing only in a few private cellars; the present, forty years since, of a dual client of mine.'

After some further quiet conversation upon the mysterious subject in hand, the lawyer put into the possession of Lord Harrogate the half of a card torn in two, which had for two decades reposed peaceably in the recesses of his own desk; and told him that this card, picked up on the towing-path by one of the men employed in searching for the child's body, was the only fragment of mute evidence that was now in existence.

THE EFFECTS OF LIGHT ON PLANTS.

It is now an ascertained fact that as a rule, no organism being in the world subsists alone by the nourishment which it absorbs, either in the form of food or of atmospheric air; it has also need of heat and light. Light is the creator of the charming colours, the sweet perfumes, the exquisite flavours which we gain from the vegetable kingdom. But how these marvellous operations are accomplished, what are the rules of the dispersion of darkness and its multiplied refractions, are not yet thoroughly determined. Let us glance at what has been already determined.

Plants are nourished by absorbing through their roots certain substances in the soil, and by decomposing through their green parts the carbonic acid gas contained in the atmosphere. They decompose this gas into carbon, which is assimilated, and into oxygen, which they exhale, and return to the atmosphere for the use of animals. This, which may be called the respiration of plants, cannot be performed without the help of the solar rays. Charles Bonnet, the well-known philosopher of Geneva, was the first in the last century to verify this truth. He remarked that all plants grow vertically, and stretch towards the sun in whatever position the seed may have been planted. We

have all noticed how plants in dark places direct their stems to the place whence a ray of light issues. He also discovered that when plunged into water they disengage bubbles or gas under the sun's influence. Our own Dr Priestley took up the subject and gained another step; he burned a light in a closed space until it went out, showing that the oxygen had been consumed, and that in consequence the air had become unfit for maintaining combustion. Into the space he introduced the green parts of a plant, and after ten days the air was so purified that the candle would burn once more. In other words he had proved that plants can substitute oxygen for carbonic acid gas. If some water-cress, for instance, be grown in water, and exposed to sunlight, the presence of the oxygen gas given off by the leaves may be demonstrated by the relighting of a paper the lingering spark of which is introduced into the vessel in which the plant is contained.

Dr Ingenhousz further explained this interesting fact. He observed that plants have the power of correcting impure air in a few hours; and that this marvellous operation is due solely to the influence of the sun upon plants. This influence only begins when the sun has risen some little time above the horizon; the obscurity of night entirely suspends the operation, as do also high buildings or the shade of trees. Towards the close of day the production of oxygen relaxes, and entirely ceases at sunset.

When these facts had been established, the explanation was soon discovered: the impure gas which was absorbed and decomposed during the day was nothing but the carbonic acid which is freely given out from the lungs of every breathing animal; the pure gas resulting from the decomposition being oxygen. But the diurnal respiration of most plants is exactly the inverse of the nocturnal, for the gas which they emit during night is the unwholesome carbonic acid. It was discovered also that mere heat could not take the place of light in these operations. There was another point which required elucidation; this was, the relation that existed between the amount of carbonic acid absorbed and of oxygen exhaled. Another Genevese citizen, De Saussure, maintained that the latter is always the smaller quantity, and that at the same time a portion of the oxygen retained by the plant is replaced by nitrogen; whilst Bousingault showed that the volume of carbonic acid decomposed was equal to that of the oxygen produced.

There is a wonderful rapidity and energy in the performance of these functions by the green parts of plants, as was proved by placing an earthen vessel in the sun filled with vine-leaves. Through this a current of carbonic acid was passed, and when it came out it was pure oxygen. It is calculated that one single leaf of the water-lily thus exhales during the summer about three hundred quarts of oxygen. Indeed there are some peculiarities about aquatic plants which make them more valuable in clearing the atmosphere than others, for during the night they are inactive and disengage no carbonic acid, whilst they act as others do in the daytime. It is easy to shew the direct action of the sun on vegetable respiration by placing some leaves of the *nyctag* in a vessel filled with water saturated with carbonic gas; as soon as this is exposed to the sun,

an infinite number of little bubbles of almost pure oxygen will be seen rising to the surface. The shadow of a cloud crossing the sky suffices to lessen this action, which is again resumed with sudden activity when it has passed. By intercepting the solar rays with a screen, the changes of quick or slow production of gas-bubbles may be clearly observed.

So far these remarks apply only to white light, that is the mixture of all the rays which the sun sends us; but this light is not simple; it is composed of seven prismatic groups of colours, the properties of which are quite distinct. This prismatic group further prolongs and extends itself by invisible radiations. Beyond the red there are radiations of heat; beyond the violet, chemical radiations. The first act on the thermometer; the second determine energetic reactions in chemical compositions. What is their influence on vegetation? Does the solar light affect plants through its colour, its chemical properties, or its heat?

Many experiments have been tried to solve this question, but it is still a matter of doubt. If plants are placed in coloured glasses, less oxygen is disengaged than under the influence of white light. Young plants grown in comparative darkness, and consequently pale as to colour, have been exposed to different rays of the spectrum, the effect being that in three hours and a half they assumed a green tint under the action of yellow light; whilst an hour longer was required for orange, and sixteen hours for blue. It is evident from this that the energy of solar action on plants corresponds neither with the maximum of heat, which lies in the red rays, nor in the maximum of chemical intensity which is at the other extremity of the spectrum, that is the violet.

If blades of grass are put into tubes filled with water charged with carbonic gas, and exposed to coloured rays, and the quantity of oxygen gas disengaged is measured, it will be found that the largest quantity is in the tubes which have been acted on by yellow and green light; afterwards those influenced by orange and red. Just as aquatic plants send out gaseous bubbles under white light, so do they to nearly the same extent under orange light, but twenty times less if placed under blue glass. These experiments would seem to prove that it is the *luminous* rays only, and principally the yellow and orange, that act upon plants. To this may be added, that green light produces much the same effect as darkness on vegetable respiration; thus explaining why there is such a slow lingering growth under the shade of large trees or forests, where the ground beneath is bathed in emerald light.

The sun also assists in the transpiration and constant renewal of the moisture essential to the tissues of plants. Like the human being, when there is no evaporation, the plant becomes dropsical, and the leaves fall because the stem is too weak to bear their weight. This imperious need and love which they have for light shews that the solar rays are really the essence which gives colour. The corollas of those flowers which grow on mountains at a great elevation have a deeper hue than those which blow in lowlands. The sun's rays pass more easily through the transparent atmosphere which bathes the higher peaks. Certain flowers

vary with their altitude; thus the *Anthyllis vulneraria* passes from white, through pale red, to an intense purple. Well-lighted and cleared tracts of land are much richer in colour than those shaded by high hedges and trees; and some flowers are observed to change during the day, owing to the direct action of the sun. The *Hibiscus mutabilis*, for instance, blooms white in the morning and becomes red at noon-day; the floral buds of the *Agapanthus umbellatus* are also white at early dawn and afterwards acquire a blue tint; the *Cheiranthus camelea* changes from white to lemon colour and then to a red violet. If a flower be taken as it is coming out of its sheath and wrapped in black paper, so as to intercept the light, it remains white; but recovers its colour when exposed to the sun. Nor are fruits any exception to this rule; the beneficial action of daylight is necessary to their development, and to all those principles which communicate taste and scent to the different parts.

Another part of this interesting study relates to the *mechanical* action which light exercises, as shewn in the sleep of flowers, the inflection of the stems, and the inclination towards the great luminary. Pliny speaks of the sunflower which always faces the sun and turns round with it; a delicate sensibility which the poet Moore has beautifully expressed in words and music. The lupine is another instance, which indicates by its diurnal revolution the hour of the day to the labourer. The stems of all plants as a rule turn towards the side of the light, and bend to drink it in. This constitutes what is known as 'heliotropism.' If cress be grown in darkness on moist cotton-wool, and then placed in a room lighted on one side only, the stems bend and incline very rapidly towards it; the higher part only turns, the lower remaining upright. But if it be placed in a room lighted by two windows, a fresh observation will be made. Supposing they are on the same side, and admitting an equal amount of light, the stem bends in the direction of the middle of the angle formed by the rays; whilst if one window allows more light to penetrate into the room than the other, the stem turns to it. When the two are opposite there is no deviation from the straight line.

There are some curious facts regarding climbing-plants; their stems generally turn from left to right round the pole used for support; others follow a contrary direction; while to some it seems to be a matter of indifference. Mr Darwin has concluded that light is an influential cause. If plants of this class are placed in a room near a window, the stem requires more time to perform the half-revolution during which it is turned away from the light, than for that which is towards the window. In one case the whole circle was completed in five hours and twenty minutes; of this the half in full light only required an hour; whilst the other could not traverse its part in less than four hours and twenty minutes—a very striking variation. Some Chinese ignamas, *Dioscorea batatas*, in full growth were placed in a completely darkened cave, and others in a garden; in every case those which were in darkness lost the power of climbing round their supports; those exposed to the sun were twisting, but as soon as they were put in the cellar they grew with straight stems.

The sleep of plants, which certainly has a connection with light, is another curiosity in nature. Flowers and leaves of some growths seem to fade at particular hours, the corolla being closed, which after a state of lethargy blows out afresh; in others, the flower falls and dies without having closed. In the case of the convolvulus the flower is drawn up at noon. Linnaeus noted the hours in which certain plants blow and fade, and thus composed a floral dial; but science has not yet been able to explain these curious relations to light.

The green colouring of leaves and stems is owing to a special matter called chlorophyll, which forms microscopic granulations contained in their cells. These grains are more or less numerous in each cell, and it is to their number as well as to the intensity of their colour that the plant owes its particular shade of green. Sometimes they are found pressed together and cover the whole internal surface of the cell; whilst at other times they are smaller in quantity and do not touch each other. It has recently been observed also in the latter case, that under the influence of light the green corpuscles undergo very curious changes of position; in certain plants they crowd to the part of the wall of the cells exposed to the action of the sun—a phenomenon which does not take place in darkness or under red rays only.

There might be given many other very interesting effects of light on plants, not usually noticed. The truth is, the direct rays of the sun exert a potent influence on every living thing, whether plant or animal. Sunlight, fair and full upon you and upon your dwelling, might be called the greatest blessing in nature; but on this branch of the subject we will not at present expatiate.

A SCARE IN CONNEMARA.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

It was on a dull sultry afternoon in July 1869, that my friend Morrissey and I found ourselves comfortably located in the commercial room of one of the hotels in Westport, County Mayo, Ireland, after a long uninteresting car-ride from Sligo and Ballina. The excellent turnpike road ran through a fat boggy district; and as we had journeyed along through dense clouds of dust, it was with an infinite sense of relief that we disencumbered ourselves of our wraps and other travelling impedimenta, and prepared ourselves for the substantial dinner which was placed on the table for our reception.

To those of our readers who are unacquainted with the 'long-cars' used in moving about from one town to another, and especially in the west of Ireland, where the climate is somewhat exhaustive from its excessive humidity, a journey upon these public conveniences has its fascinations as well as its drawbacks; for in going through the country on these vehicles, you can always, excepting in stormy or dusty weather, insure capital views of the scenery of the district, pick up a gossiping acquaintance with your fellow-travellers, readily command the local information in the possession of your charioteer, and be alternately amused and annoyed at one time with his legendary and romantic stories, and at another with his sarcastic reflections on the 'misgovern-

ment' of the country since it came under a dominion not entirely its own. An Irish car-driver always appears to me to be of a strikingly representative type of the Milesian race. He is impulsive and rash, credulous and wildly poetical, with a dash of superstition and romance in his character, and a constantly recurring lament for the 'good old times' that prevailed when Brian Boru was king. At the same time, he is an excellent *compagnon de voyage*, and if he is properly treated and humoured, will pour out for your delectation quite a flood of antiquarian, genealogical, historical, and legendary lore, appertaining to the country in which you are, and the noteworthy objects around you.

Morrissey and I were joined at dinner by a fellow-tourist who had travelled on the car from Ballina; and as this gentleman is the principal hero of the little adventure I am about to relate, it is necessary I should put the reader in possession of some particulars respecting him. His appearance was both striking and peculiar. At the Ballina car-office he was very anxious about the disposition of his luggage. This property consisted of a rifle-case, a long wooden trunk which he said contained his 'fixings,' a hat-case of leather, several other boxes which sadly taxed the carrying capacity of the car, and quite a miscellaneous collection of parcels and wrappers. Though only standing some five feet eight inches in height, he was strongly built, and of good muscular development, his complexion having somewhat suffered from a long-continued residence in America. He wore a conical-shaped wide-awake of green felt; his gold watch, which with its appurtenances of seals and lockets, was frequently prominently and somewhat ostentatiously displayed, bore on the reverse the harp of Ireland beautifully enamelled on a green background; and he carried a small pocket pistol in the breast of his waistcoat. He had previously told us that his name was John Hanlon; that he had left Ireland in consequence of a little political trouble, some twenty years previously; that he was now a prosperous floor-cloth manufacturer at Baltimore, and that he was paying a long-cherished visit to his native country previous to his final settlement in the transatlantic land of his adoption. Mr Hanlon somewhat surprised me by the freedom of speech he indulged in on all subjects that cropped up for discussion on the road, and I could only explain it on the hypothesis that his lengthened sojourn in America, and the liberal toleration of political questions there enjoyed by all classes, had lent to his ordinary conversation a fluency and a license which were comparatively unknown in our more cautious latitude. Hanlon evidently considered himself a citizen of the Great Republic, and was certainly far from restricted in the expression of his sentiments on subjects ranging from the latest Democratic ticket in his adopted state, to the question of greater political and social freedom for his fatherland.

My friend Bryan Morrissey possessed many traits of character and feeling in common with Mr Hanlon, and consequently it was not at all extraordinary to find that they almost immediately struck up a close intimacy. Morrissey, a somewhat slimy-built fellow of six feet, was a County Waterford man; and his fervent poetical and patriotic temperament was so strongly displayed during the troubles in Tipperary in 1848,

that he judged it expedient for the good of his health to make a somewhat sudden voyage to New York. Finding many sympathetic friends in Cork, he was one fine night quietly smuggled on board an outward-bound vessel at Queenstown; and in a month he found himself at Castle Gardens, on Manhattan Island, with a couple of sovereigns in his pocket, three shirts, a Sunday suit, and letters of introduction to a number of Irish Nationalists in the cosmopolitan city of New York. For a couple of months he led a very active life of unprofitable energy, his time mainly occupied in addressing huge meetings; but at length he got disgusted with the game of politics, so unblushingly played there by mercenary 'patriots;' and as he saw no prospect of succeeding in his business as a counting-house clerk, he slipped over to England; and finding that the pursuit of the Young Ireland conspirators had been judiciously relaxed, he took a post as a store-manager in a Yorkshire manufacturing town which I shall call Fleeceborough, and for a number of years devoted himself so closely and assiduously to his essentially prosaic duties, that even the new acquaintances—of whom I was one—who gathered around him, scarcely realised how deep were his convictions on certain 'burning questions' of national sentiment connected with his own country, and at what great hazard he had, at an earlier period of his life, advocated and compromised himself by his enunciation of those opinions.

Considered as a warm friend and a lively and entertaining acquaintance, Morrissey was everything that one could wish; and as he was well versed in ancient as well as contemporary history, and had an appreciative acquaintance with the modern poets, especially such as Byron, Burns, Moore, and Campbell, whose aspirations after liberty were warm and fervent, his company was highly appreciated by the little earnest band of embryo publicists among whom he found himself in the radical town of Fleeceborough. By his outdoor political speeches and harangues in America, he had contracted severe colds, which ultimately somewhat affected his hearing—an ailment afflicting enough in itself, but which had its occasional benefits, a salient example of which will be seen in the further progress of this narrative.

Coming to myself, as the third of the party, I may briefly inform the reader that my name is Robert Talbot, that I am generally accounted a pleasant and fairly informed acquaintance, rather given to punning and other word-dislocating frivolities, though esteemed for my patience as a good listener, and as one who generally appreciates any smart or witty remark made by another. In fact my habit of preserving these good conversational things is so strong that it has been my practice to 'take them down in black and white;' and as they sometimes crop up and out on seasonable and auspicious occasions, I have got myself generally known by the name of 'the repeater.' And it was during a pleasure excursion through the highlands of Connemara that Morrissey and I thus became acquainted with Mr John Hanlon, floor-cloth manufacturer, of Baltimore, United States.

Dinner passed pleasantly enough at the Westport hotel. The provision was bountiful and miscellaneous in its character, and we chatted over

the table as if we had been acquainted for years. When the cloth had been removed, Morrissey and Hanlon drew themselves more confidentially together, and soon commenced exchanging reminiscences of the 'affair of 1848,' over a jug of whisky-punch. In the earlier hours of the evening their conversation was quiet and decorous enough, but with the interchange of mutual confidences, the narration of mutually interesting incidents connected with the 'rising,' and the frequent appeals to the inspiring liquor which the constantly replenished 'Toby' supplied, they soon became more cosy, and began to fight their patriotic battles over again in strains more hearty and convivial than ordinary sobriety would have warranted.

Another person had by this time joined the party. Although a complete stranger to ourselves, he was evidently well known to the people at the hotel, for the waiters treated him with a certain deference for which I was unable to account. Although plainly and respectably dressed in a kind of frieze cut-away suit, these clothes did not seem to sit comfortably and naturally upon him; and when he rose to procure a light for his pipe or to ring the bell for another supply of punch, he paced the room with a habit of precision and regularity that somehow suggested to me that he must at one time of his life have been in the army. The waiters were somewhat obsequious in their attention to his orders, called him with emphasis 'Mister Doolan,' and appeared to hold him in a certain degree of respect, if not of absolute fear. Mister Doolan paid particular regard to the conversation of my Irish friends Morrissey and Hanlon; and if at any time the continuity of their narratives appeared likely to be broken in favour of subjects more generally interesting to myself as an Englishman, I noticed that he was at extraordinary pains to bring it back to the point at which I had broken in upon their talk, and to induce them to resume the story of their experiences.

As I was very tired with the jolting motion of the car—a species of locomotion with which I had been previously unfamiliar—I soon afterwards retired to rest; but even after I had got to bed in the room above, I could hear my friends below in the full flight of conversation, not only on the past of Ireland, but in somewhat hazy prophecies as to the future of their beloved country. To the music of this harmonious but disturbing concert, relieved at times by the more measured and careful utterances of Mister Doolan, I listened for a time, until the voices became a monotonous drone in my sleepy ear; and then I sank into the elysium of sleep, a paradise doubly grateful to me after the fatiguing incidents of the day, and the consciousness that though I was in a strange land I was neither alone nor unbefriended.

As some of my readers will be aware, Ireland was at this time suffering in the throes of the Fenian agitation. Not only was a deep patriotic feeling prevalent among honest Irishmen, but the national spirit was also being moved strongly and passionately by the Irish Americans, who were quietly invading the country, and making large and extravagant promises of American support to another rising against English rule. The extraordinary enthusiasm manifested by Irish men and women at that time settled in the United States;

and the heartiness with which money was subscribed by all classes of the community, from the middle classes down to the humblest labourers of both sexes, still arrests the attention of the historian, and excites his surprise that enthusiasm so general in its character should have so powerfully impressed the children of Erin who peacefully sojourned in a distant land. The fact remains that for some time Ireland was seething like a restricted volcano, the under-current of patriotism being deep, earnest, and general. Government at length awoke to the seriousness of the crisis, and after a long period of inaction, the English officials came to the conclusion that not only was sedition rife in that unhappy country of Ireland, but that a great proportion of the mischief was directly traceable to Irish-American agents, who with military titles and the nucleus of military organisations, were constantly landing on her shores. It was not, however, until the English government found that chests and packages of arms and munitions of war were being systematically despatched to and distributed through a large range of the country, that they fairly took the alarm, and began to exercise a stricter supervision over the arrival of American Hibernians in Ireland, and took measures for obtaining careful information of the movements of such disaffected persons as had already procured a footing in the country. Not only were the soldiery placed on the alert, but that semi-military organisation, the Irish constabulary, had also instructions to scrutinise carefully the persons and movements of strangers and travellers in the interior of the country. These regulations, of a repressive as well as detective character, were in full force in certain wild and disturbed districts at the time that Morrissey and I were taking our peaceful excursion; and they were the means of bringing about the curious imbroglio I am now about to describe.

When I descended to the coffee-room next morning, I did not find either of my companions of the previous night. As they had not evidently yet slept off the fumes of the whisky-punch, I strolled down to the beach of Clew Bay, and was soon drinking in not only the fine mountain and sea breeze, but also the wild but charming scenery of that fine district. Leaving behind me the desolate ruined warehouses which told the mournful story of the past, when Westport was indeed the western harbour of Ireland, I saw in the near distance the placid waters of the bay, studded with its numerous and picturesque islets; whilst to the left—rearing itself in savage majesty over the waters—frowned the Reek of Croagh Patrick, the sacred mountain of the district, and up the craggy sides of which, pilgrimages to the stone hut of St Patrick are still regularly made. The light haze resting upon the sea and the cloudy vapour that encircled the summit of Croagh Patrick, appeared destined soon to give way before the western breeze, that already curled the surface of the bay into miniature waves and lent a refreshing fragrance to the morning air. But though thus inspired by the ramble, I could not help thinking with some uneasiness of the dangerously outspoken language both Morrissey and Hanlon had been using when in their cups, though I had heard so much of the proverbial good-fellowship of the Irish character, that I was reluctant to bring myself to the conviction that any such loose talk would be unfavour-

ably brought up against them. At the same time, considering the state of the country and the many warnings on the subject of political discussion which I had received in Dublin, I could not avoid regretting that the conversation had taken such a dangerous direction, feeling assured that if any of the police or military authorities had been in the Commercial Room at the time, they would have been bound to notice what Morrissey and Hanlon might call 'patriotic talk,' but which other keen protectors of law and order might designate as seditious and treasonable utterances. It was while thus engaged in chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy that I again found myself at the door of the hotel, in front of which was already standing the long-car on which we purposed journeying that day to Clifden.

I found both Morrissey and Hanlon in the coffee-room awaiting my appearance. The breakfast table was profusely laden with substantial delicacies; but though I was ready enough for that meal, I could see at a glance that my companions were not equally prepared. Both looked sheepish enough in all conscience, and on the principle that if you feel ill you must take 'a hair of the dog that bit you,' each of them had a suspicious-looking glass of 'mountain-dew' at his elbow. Neither seemed inclined for eating, and I therefore had the breakfast-table much to myself. I tried to interest them by describing the delightful walk I had enjoyed to the bay, but was unable to galvanise either life or spirit into them. My only hope was that the fresh keen sea-air and the thrilling excitement of the car-ride might by-and-by restore them to their wonted physical and mental equilibrium.

As the weather had by this time cleared up, and there was every prospect of a fine pleasant journey of forty miles to Clifden, through the heart of the Connemara mountains, the car filled rapidly that morning, partly with visitors like ourselves and partly with residents in the district. Within the latter category evidently came two fine-looking undoubted Irishmen, who took their seats on my side of the conveyance, and who interested me by their conversation and evident familiarity with the sights of the neighbourhood. They were well thought plainly dressed, and evidently devoted themselves to the task of engaging me in talk of a nature innocent enough in itself, but which later on grew somewhat irksome and suspicious. Morrissey and Hanlon were on the other side of the car; and just as it was about to start, our friend Doolan came up in a bit of a hurry, and took the vacant seat which had been left unoccupied by their side. Doolan, who was spruce and collected enough, and who looked as fresh as a daisy, gave me a half-familiar nod, and then exchanged the compliments of the day with my friends. It struck me that Hanlon received his approaches in a half-sullen, half-distant manner, but that I set down to my latent suspicions respecting the man; and as the car rattled gaily over the road to Leenane, and I heard little bursts of laughter and apparently rosy jests exchanged by that party, I felt ashamed of the apprehension by which I was still haunted.

The route, at first direct south, curved a little westward as we approached Killary Bay, through the mountains, land-locked, tortuous courses of which the Atlantic was now rolling in magnificent grandeur. I was entranced with the first

view of this fine picture, embracing high rugged rocks overhanging the bay, with a stern range of mountains in the north-west, and a splendid natural harbour in which the navy of England might safely ride, protected from all winds except the west. My enthusiasm increased as we neared Leenane, which pretty little village nestled snugly and picturesquely at the head of Killery, and where we stopped to change horses. Here Mr Doolan alighted, somewhat to my surprise; though I fancied a look of intelligence passed between him and the two Irishmen with whom I had been in conversation. In answer to my question as to whether he was not going farther with us, he quietly remarked that he had a little business in the neighbourhood, but that he would be seeing us again in the course of the day. I noticed that Doolan turned up an avenue leading to a gentleman's house; and on asking the driver who resided in that fine mansion, was somewhat dryly told that 'it was the country residence of Mr Sarsfield, a magistrate.'

AN ASCENT OF ARARAT.

THE first recorded ascent of the great mountain which is an object of veneration to all the races who inhabit Asia Minor, however various they may be in blood, in customs, and in creeds; the mountain to which tradition assigns the resting of the Ark from its floating above the ruins of a drowned world, and at whose foot at this present time three empires meet, took place in 1829. Ararat was then ascended by Dr Frederick Parrot, a Russo-German Professor in the university of Dorpat, after whom is named one of the pinnacles of Monte Rosa. After two unsuccessful attempts, the Professor reached the top of the mountain with a party of three Armenians and two Russian soldiers. The second ascent was made in 1834 by Spassky-Altonomof, who went up in order to ascertain whether it was really true that the stars are visible at noon from the tops of the highest mountains. The third was made by Herr Abich in 1845. General Chodzko, while conducting the survey of Transcaucasia, reached the top with a large party in 1850, and remained there for a week in a tent pitched on the snow. And a party of Englishmen—who, however, believed that they were the first who had accomplished the feat—ascended from the Turkish side in 1856.

Yet, though these several exploits are perfectly proven to the European world, Mr James Bryce tells us in his *Transcaucasia and Ararat* (London: Macmillan & Co.), that 'there is not a person living within sight of Ararat, unless possibly some exceptionally educated Russian official in Erivan, who believes that any human foot since Father Noah's has trodden that sacred summit.'

The mountain, divided into two peaks called Great and Little Ararat, forms an elliptical mass of about twenty-five miles in length from north-west to south-east, and about half that width. 'Little Ararat is an elegant cone or pyramid, rising with steep, smooth, regular sides into a comparatively sharp peak. Great Ararat is a huge broad-shouldered mass, more like a dome than a cone, supported by strong buttresses, and throwing out rough ribs or ridges of rock that stand out like knotty muscles from its solid trunk.'

The latest mark which the hand of Nature has set upon this mighty mountain was made in 1840, and the story is a pathetic one. Near the mouth of the great chasin with its crown of tremendous precipices, there formerly stood a pleasant little Armenian village, of two hundred houses, named Aghurri. The dwellers there were pastoral people like their forefathers, who fed their flocks in the Alpine pastures, and cultivated a few fields which were watered by the glacier-stream. They claimed that the vine which bore these delicious grapes was Father Noah's own, and that the ancient willow, the pride of the village, had sprung from one of the planks of the Ark. The little monastery of St Jacob had for eight hundred years stood just above the village, on the spot where the angel of the legend had appeared to the monk. With the exception of the wandering Kurds, the inhabitants of Aghurri were the only dwellers on the mountain; in their village its traditions centred, and there they were faithfully preserved. Thus Mr Bryce relates the fate of the happy mountain village: 'Towards sunset in the evening of the 21st of June 1840, the sudden shock of an earthquake, accompanied by a subterranean roar, and followed by a terrific blast of wind, threw down the houses of Aghurri, and at the same moment detached enormous masses of rock with their superjacent ice from the cliffs that surround the chasm. A shower of falling rocks overwhelmed in an instant the village, the monastery, and a Kurdish encampment on the pastures above. Not a soul survived to tell the tale. Four days afterwards, the masses of snow and ice that had been precipitated into the glen suddenly melted, and forming an irresistible torrent of water and mud, swept along the channel of the stream and down the outer slopes of the mountain, far away into the Aras Plain, bearing with them huge blocks, and covering the ground for miles with a deep bed of mud and gravel. . . . Since then, a few huts have again arisen, somewhat lower down the slope than the site of old Aghurri; here dwell a few Tatars, and pasture their cattle on the sides of the valley, which grass has again begun to clothe. But Noah's vine and the primeval willow, and the little monastery where Parrot lived so happily, among the few old monks who had retired to this hallowed spot from the troubles of the world, are gone for ever; no Christian bell is heard, no Christian service said upon the Mountain of the Ark.'

From the Russian station of Aralykh, on the line where the last and very gentle slope of Ararat melts into the perfectly flat bottom of the Araxes valley, Mr Bryce and his companion commenced their ascent of the mountain on the 11th of September 1876. The officer in command at Aralykh, a Mohammedan noble from the Caucasus, gave them horses and a mounted Cossack escort to take them to Sardarbulakh, a small military outpost on the pass between Great and Little Ararat. Past a Kurdish encampment and up a grassy slope the travellers rode to Sardarbulakh — 'the Governor's Well' — a very pleasant frontier-post, but to them a place of refreshing indeed, though the beginning of troubles. Horses could go no farther, the necessities for bivouac must be carried, and the Cossacks would not carry them. Kurds had to be procured and bargained with,

a time-wasting process all the more trying to the travellers that they could not understand what was said on either side. The glorious snows were beckoning them, the precious minutes were flying, but there was nothing for it except patience.

At length it became evident that the travellers must camp at Sardarbulakh; neither Kurd nor Cossack would face the terrors of the mountain at night at an unfamiliar height. For the unforeseen annoyance there arose one unexpected item of consolation; a band of Kurds, who had just crossed the flanks of Little Ararat from Persia in search of fresher pasture, came up, driving their cattle to the Governor's Well; and the travellers beheld, in the most ancient scene within the historic record, a picture which vividly reproduced the first simple life of the world. The well is an elliptical hollow three feet deep, surrounded by a loose wall of lumps of lava; troughs were set up all over the surrounding pasture. And Kurdish boys and girls went busily to work filling brazen bowls and carrying the water to the troughs, whence the sheep, small creatures like those of the Scotch Highlands, and the goats—'exactly like the scapegoat of Mr Holman Hunt's picture—drank. For two hours the watering went on, and the boys and girls and women were so intent upon their work that they hardly glanced at the strangers from Frangistan, wonderfully foreign as the group must have been to them. Only a few men were of the nomad party, and they were armed; the women and girls were most picturesquely dressed, all unveiled, and each carried a distaff in one hand, with a lump of wool upon her wrist, and this they plied as they drove the flocks before them. Mr Bryce sketches the scene in eloquent words: 'In the foreground were the beautiful flocks, the exquisite colours of the women's dresses and ornaments, their own graceful figures, the stir and movement beside the clear pool, the expanse of rolling pasture around with its patch of tender little birchwood. On each side a towering cone rose to heaven, while in front the mountain slope swept down into the broad valley, and beyond, stern red mountains ranged away, ridge over ridge, to the eastern horizon, all bare and parched, with every peak and gully standing sharp out through the clear air, yet softened by distance into the most delicately rich and tender hues. Here, where a picture of primitive life close at hand was combined with a vision of broad countries, inhabited by many peoples, stretching out to the shores of the inland sea of Asia, one seemed at a glance to take in and realise their character and history, unchanging in the midst of change. Through the empires of Assyria and Persia and Macedon, through Parthian Arsacids and Iranian Sassanids, through the reigns of Arabian Califs and Turkish Sultans and Persian Shahs, these Kurds have roamed as they roam now, over the slopes of the everlasting mountains, watering their flocks at this spring, pitching their goats-hair tents in the recesses of these lonely rocks, chanting their wildly pathetic lays, with neither a past to remember nor a future to plan for.'

Among the many memories of his ascent of Mount Ararat, doubtless Mr Bryce will cherish that of the halt at the Governor's Well with peculiar pleasure. The bivouac too in such a spot, and amid the astonishing silence of the mountains,

where no torrents call to one another, no rills ripple, no boughs rustle, no stones slip and fall, must have been memorable too. At 1 A.M. the party started, thirteen in number, and made across grassy hollows for the ridges which trend up the great cone; the Kurds leading the way. The travellers' hopes were high; the Kurds got on rapidly; their pace was better than that of the Swiss guides; but it soon slackened; and at the top of the first steep bit these sturdy fellows sat down to rest; and they repeated the performance every quarter of an hour, sitting seven or eight minutes each time, smoking and chattering, and utterly indifferent to gestures of remonstrance and appeals. The travellers could not make them understand their speech—the interpreter had left them at Sardarbulakh; 'and,' says Mr Bryce, 'it was all very well to beckon them, or pull them by the elbow or clap them on the back; they thought this was only our fun, and sat still and chattered all the same.'

When daylight came the travellers began to despair, but also to enjoy the wonderful effects of light. At 3 A.M. they had seen the morning-star spring up from behind the Median mountains, shedding a light that almost outshone the moon. An hour later, there came upon the topmost slope of the cold and ghostly snows of the cone, six thousand feet above, a flush of pink. 'Swiftly it floated down the eastern face, and touched and kindled the rocks above us,' says the author; 'and then the sun flamed out, and in a moment the Araxes valley and all the hollows of the savage ridges we were crossing were flooded with overpowering light.' At six o'clock it became evident that neither Cossacks nor Kurds would go farther. Mr Bryce then resolved to leave them, to await his return or not as they pleased, and to make the ascent of the snow-cone alone; his friend, being unequal to the exertion, agreed to wait about and look out for him at nightfall. They had now reached a height of twelve thousand feet; everything, except Little Ararat opposite, lay below them; the awful cone rose there from where they sat, its glittering snows and stern black crags of lava standing up perfectly clear in a sea of cloudless blue; taunting indeed, but awe-inspiring too, for the summit was hidden behind the nearer slopes, and no one could tell what the difficulties of the ascent might be. The Kurds and the Cossacks knew nothing, and could not tell, if they had known anything on the subject.

At 8 A.M. Mr Bryce buckled on his canvas gaiters, put some meat lozenges, four hard-boiled eggs, a small flask of tea, some crusts of bread, and a lemon, into his pocket, bade his friend goodbye, and set off, accompanied, to his no small surprise, by two Cossacks (who had been much amused by the ice-axe) and one Kurd. After two hours' climbing, only one Cossack remained with the daring mountaineer, and the courage of this worthy gave way before a terrible sheer cliff, which had to be reached by steps cut in the intervening snow. Mr Bryce bade him by signs return to the bivouac, and pressed on alone.

After two hours' incessant toil up a straight slope of volcanic minerals, fragments of trachyte and other stones, which perpetually slipped under his foot and hand, it became a question whether the gasping climber could possibly reach the

desired goal. He would not at all events give it up yet; and after a severe struggle with this decidedly bad bit, he got on to a rock rib, where he was revived by beholding a spectacle which he describes as perhaps the grandest on the whole mountain. 'At my foot,' he says, 'was a deep, narrow, impassable gully, in whose bottom snow lay where the inclination was not too steep. Beyond it a line of rocky towers, red, grim, and terrible, ran right up towards the summit, its upper end lost in the clouds, through which, as at intervals they broke or shifted, one could descry, far, far above, a wilderness of snow.'

Having crossed the fissure, Mr Bryce began a tremendous climb along a slope of friable rocks which ran up till lost in clouds, and among which he was saluted by a violent sulphurous smell, which made him look for some trace of an eruptive vent, or at least for hot vapours betraying the presence of subterranean fires. Nothing of the kind is to be seen, however, and he attributes the smell to the natural decomposition of the trachytic rock, which is full of minute crystals of sulphide of iron. All the way up this rock-slope, the climber kept his eye fixed on its upper end, to see what signs there were of crags or snow-fields above. He was now thousands of feet above Little Ararat, which looked more like a broken obelisk than an independent summit twelve thousand eight hundred feet in height. 'With mists to the left and above,' he says, 'and a range of black precipices cutting off all view to the right, there came a vehement sense of isolation and solitude, and I began to understand better the awe with which the mountain-silence inspires the Kurdish shepherds. Overhead, the sky had turned from dark blue to an intense bright green, a colour whose strangeness added to the weird terror of the scene.'

In another hour he must turn back, whether he should have gained the summit or not; to be overtaken by darkness upon the mountain would mean death; already he was suffering very severely from cold, and his strength was nearly exhausted. The rest must be told in his own simple forcible words: 'At length the rock-slope came suddenly to an end, and I stepped out upon the almost level snow at the top of it, coming at the same time into the clouds, which cling to the colder surfaces. . . . In the thick mist the eye could pierce only some thirty yards ahead; so I walked on over the snow five or six minutes, following the rise of its surface, which was gentle, and fancying there might still be a good way to go. To mark the backward track, I trailed the point of the ice-axe along behind me in the soft snow, for there was no longer any landmark; all was closed on every side. Suddenly, to my astonishment, the ground began to fall away to the north; I stopped; a puff of wind drove off the mists on one side, the opposite side to that by which I had come, and shewed the Araxes Plain at an abyssal depth below. It was the top of Ararat.'

The traveller himself could not put into words the wonder and awe with which he was filled by the spectacle which lay before him. We can only indicate the chief features of that astonishing panorama, which included Kazbek and Elbruz, the latter two hundred and eighty miles away, and had the Caspian Sea upon its dim horizon. The

mountains of Daghestan, the extinct volcano of Ala Goz, Erivan with its orchards and its vineyards, Araxes like a silver thread, the Taurus ranges and Bingol Dagh, the great Russian fortress of Alexandropol, and Kars, its enemy then, now in Russian hands. Two hundred miles away could be faintly descried the blue tops of the Assyrian mountains of Southern Kurdistan, 'mountains that look down on Mosul and those huge mounds of Nineveh by which the Tigris flows.' Below and around, included in this single view, seemed to lie the whole cradle of the human race, 'from Mesopotamia in the south to the great wall of the Caucasus that covered the northern horizon, the boundary of the civilised world.' No wonder that looking on such a scene, a solitary man should feel terrified at his own insignificance. 'Nature,' says the traveller, 'sits enthroned, serenely calm, upon this hoary pinnacle, and speaks to her children only in the storm and earthquake that level their dwellings in the dust.'

No wonder the solitary man could take no heed of time until, while the eye was still unsatisfied with gazing, the curtain of mist closed again, and, says the author, 'I was left alone in this little plain of snow, white, silent, and desolate, with a vividly bright green sky above it, and a wild west wind whistling across it, clouds girding it in, and ever and anon through the clouds glimpses of far-stretching valleys and mountains away to the world's end.'

Mr Bryce accomplished the descent speedily and safely, reaching the encampment at six o'clock in the evening. Two days later, he and his friend went to visit the Armenian monastery of Etchmiadzin, near the northern foot of Ararat, and were presented to the Archimandrite. Here is Mr Bryce's pithy account of the interview: 'It came out in conversation that we had been on the mountain, and the Armenian gentleman who was acting as interpreter turned to the Archimandrite, and said: "This Englishman says he has ascended to the top of Massis (Ararat)." The venerable man smiled sweetly. "No," he replied; "that cannot be. No one has ever been there. It is impossible."

LEGAL GLEANINGS.

STICKLERS for their rights or fancied rights are rarely deterred from trying legal conclusions with an adversary by reason of the game not being worth the candle. In 1819 the Master of the Rolls delivered judgment in a case he described as the most difficult one he had ever been called upon to decide; a case which had been before the court for ten years, and cost each side some four thousand pounds; the matter in dispute being the ownership of a couple of perches of land of the value of ten pounds.

Not long ago a traveller by a London tram-car refused, 'from principle,' to pay his fare of two-pence until he arrived at the end of his journey; and a magistrate sympathising with him, dismissed the summons obtained by the Company. The latter appealed to the Court of Queen's Bench, and got the case remitted to the police court; the upshot being that the traveller was fined one shilling, and had to pay the costs incurred by

the Company, amounting to something like fifty pounds!

To pay for defeat is bad enough, but to win and yet lose by victory is certainly worse. A gentleman once spent two thousand pounds in establishing his claim to compensation for an infraction of his rights, and then was awarded one hundred and ten pounds by the assessor of the damages.—Nor, if his time was of any value to him, did a labourer, seeking to recover ten shillings from an innkeeper for refusing to supply him with refreshment, find himself the richer for invoking the aid of the law. Going into a public-house, he called for half a pint of 'four-half,' for which he put down his penny; but mine host refused to serve him, so that he was compelled to go farther, to a house on the opposite side of the street, where they sold beer that 'did not suit him so well.' For this he claimed damages in the county court, and got them, the judge giving him one shilling.—But more unfortunate was a Yorkshire wight who won his cause and two shillings damages at York assizes, but had to go to prison for his own costs.

Something said by a frank-speaking witness in a case tried by Lord Mansfield impelled his lordship to remark: 'You have said the parish funds are often imprudently applied, and you have mentioned that you once served as churchwarden yourself. If you have no objection, I should wish to hear what was done with the money at that time.'

'Why, my lord,' said the farmer, 'the money was worse applied when I was churchwarden than ever I knew it to be in my life.'

'Indeed,' said the judge; 'I should be glad to know how?'

'Well, my lord, I will tell you,' replied the witness. 'A gentleman left a hundred and twenty pounds to the poor of our parish. We applied for it again and again; but it wouldn't do: the executors, the lawyers, and one and another were glad to keep the money in their hands; for you know, my lord, it is an old saying, that might can overcome right. We did not know what to do. I came to your lordship—then Counsellor Murray—for advice, and you advised us to file a bill in Chancery. We did so; and after throwing a great deal of good money after bad, we got what they call a decree; and such a decree it was, that when all expenses were paid, I reckon we were about a hundred and seventy-five pounds out of pocket. Now, my lord, I leave you to judge whether the parish money was not worse employed when I was churchwarden than ever it was before.' Lord Mansfield thought it might have been used to better profit.

When a man makes a formal contract he should be sure it is one the law will recognise. A would-be Benedict of Hancoc, Ohio, offered fifty dollars reward to any one who would procure him 'a wife.' Sam Wickham introduced a bewitching widow, and the wedding soon came off. Then Wickham wanted the dollars; but the happy man would not pay. His plea perhaps was that he had got a widow and not a wife. Sam brought an action for the money, and lost it, and as he paid his lawyer's bill, solemnly abjured the wife-procuring business henceforth for evermore.—A year or two ago, one Thomas Clegg sued Charles Derrick in the Rochdale county court upon the following bill of particulars: 'For finding a husband valued at fifty pounds, commission five per cent. per annum; two

pounds ten shillings.' The plaintiff deposed that the wife of the defendant, when a single woman, contracted with him to get her a husband, saying, she was twenty-six, not married yet, and feared she never would be; and if he would get Derrick to marry her, she would pay him five per cent. upon fifty pounds a year. He brought the pair together, and considered that the husband was bound to fulfil the wife's agreement. But Mr Clegg learned that a contract to procure marriage between two parties for reward was altogether illegal, and could not be sustained.

As regards matrimonial contracts, the sexes are assuredly not on an equality. When Miss Roxalana Hoonan sued Mr Earle for breach of promise in a Brooklyn court, she admitted the gentleman had never promised marriage by his hand or tongue, but he had kissed her in company; and Judge Neilson told the jury that no interchange of words was necessary, 'the gleam of the eye and the conjunction of the lips being overtures when frequent and protracted;' and thus directed, they made the defendant pay fifteen thousand dollars for heedlessly indulging in eye-gleams and lip-conjunctions.

Extreme explicitness would seem to be required when trafficking with Frenchmen. In 1870, a lady purchased two hundred pounds' worth of jewellery in Paris, the jeweller giving her a written promise to exchange the articles if not approved. She wore them for half-a-dozen years, and then intimated to the astonished man her desire to change them for others of newer style. He naturally demurred, arguing, as his advocate urged before the civil tribunal, that it was unreasonable that he should be called upon to accept at the price originally paid for them, trinkets that had been used constantly for six years. The court nevertheless decided that the agreement did not define the period during which the exchange might be made, and he must do his customer's bidding. This might be law; equity it certainly was not. As we write, a case of a very similar kind has just been decided in London against Mr Streeter, the well-known jeweller, who, having promised to take back a diamond ring if not approved of, was obliged to do so, though his customer had retained it for three years.

Sharp practice is not always so successful. A gentleman took railway tickets for himself, his servants, and his horses. After the passengers were seated, it was found expedient to divide the train, the gentleman being in the first part. When the second train was about to start, the cry was 'Tickets, please.' The servants having gone, they and the horses were turned out of their places and left behind. The gentleman sued the Company. The latter brought forward their by-law setting forth that no passenger would be allowed to enter a carriage without having first obtained a ticket, to be produced on demand. The court very properly over-ruled the plea, deciding that by delivering the tickets to the master, and not to the servants severally, the Company had contracted with him personally, and could not justify their failure to carry out the contract they had made. This was perhaps just, but we should advise that in all such cases each passenger should have possession of his own ticket.

Hood once figured in a court of law as a defendant in an action for libel, the plaintiff being Sir

John Carr, author of *The Stranger in Ireland*, *The Stranger in France*, and other tedious books of travel. Appended to the poet's *My Pocket-book*, or *Hints for a right merrie and conceited Tour, in Quarto*, to be called *The Stranger in Ireland in 1805*, was a sketch entitled 'The Knight leaving Ireland with regret.' This was the libel, being, as Sir John or his legal aid put it, 'a certain false, scandalous, malicious, ridiculous, and defamatory representation of the said Sir John Carr, in the form of a man of ludicrous and ridiculous appearance, holding a pocket-handkerchief to his face, and appearing to be weeping, and also containing therein a false, malicious, and ridiculous representation of a man of ridiculous and ludicrous appearance following the said representation of the said John Carr, and loaded with and bending under the weight of three large books, and a pocket-handkerchief appearing to be held in one of the hands of the representation of a man, and the corners thereof appearing to be tied together as if containing something therein, with the printed word *wardrobe* depending therefrom; thereby falsely and maliciously meaning and intending to represent, for the purpose of rendering the said Sir John Carr ridiculous, and exposing him to laughter, ridicule, and contempt, that one copy of the said first above-mentioned book, and two copies of the said secondly above-mentioned book, were so heavy as to cause a man to bend under the weight thereof, and that his the said Sir John Carr's wardrobe was very small, and capable of being contained in a pocket-handkerchief.' Spite of this precise specification of the offence committed by the pencil of the pun-loving poet, twelve good men and true failed to find that the traveller had been libelled, however much he might have been affronted.

A young man losing his wits through parental thwarting of his matrimonial aspirations, was placed in an asylum. Having occasion to leave his charge for a few minutes, the attendant forgot to lock the door upon him. The lunatic taking advantage of the oversight, slipped out of the room, made his way to an upper gallery, smashed the window, and leaped out a thirty feet fall. The shock restored his reason, but he was crippled for life; and his father brought an action against the superintendent of the asylum for compensation. The judge ruled that the superintendent could not be held guilty of neglect because his subordinate failed in his duty; and so saved the jury the trouble of assessing damages, which, supposing they set the benefit done to the patient's mind against the injury done to his limbs, would have been a difficult matter for calculation.

Almost as difficult as that left to certain assessors appointed by the civil tribunal of Melun. The plaintiff in a case tried in that court alleged that M. de Sagonnac had ordered his gamekeeper to place snares near his land, in which 'bats, owls and other night-birds' were caught; in consequence of which mice and other vermin had so multiplied that his crops were spoiled. The tribunal holding that if the facts were so, the defendant would be liable, appointed three farmers to ascertain if any damage had been done to the plaintiff's crops; whether that damage was due to animals whose presence on the land arose from the destruction of birds of prey by the defendant's keeper; and if so, to assess the amount of the plaintiff's

loss.—A yet more puzzling suit is still at the time we write awaiting the decision of the American bench. A landslip in Shodaek filled up a creek and turned the water in a different direction. The proprietor of a mill deprived of its motive-power, sues the farmer owning the land on which the slip occurred, not for damages, but to compel him to restore the stream to its former channel.

ANOTHER PARTRIDGE AND HER CHICKS.

A correspondent obliges us with the following: 'Having read the "Story of a Partridge and her Chicks," which appeared in your *Journal* of October 6, 1877, I can fully concur with the writer regarding the strong attachment the partridge has for her young.

'When spending a few holidays in the Highlands last summer, I was witness of a somewhat similar incident. Accompanying the worthy farmer with whom I was staying to the hayfield one morning, the reapers discovered a partridge sitting on her eggs right in the way of their scythes. As they could not proceed without her being removed, the farmer gently lifted her and placed the eggs one by one in his hat, to carry them to a place of safety; the poor bird meanwhile being in great distress, watching every movement with fluttering wings and palpitating heart, thinking, no doubt, we intended robbing her. No sooner had she seen the last egg safely removed, than, with a cry of delight, she flew on to his shoulder, and leaping down on the hat containing her eggs, carefully spread her feathers, and remained sitting upon them till they were placed out of all danger under one of the hayricks. On going to see how she fared in her new abode in the evening, we were greatly surprised to see her surrounded by a numerous and interesting family.

'This bird continued about the farm all the time the brood remained by her, and at last got so tame that she would feed with the poultry. But alas! Puss made sad havoc among her chicks, only seven out of the twenty-three which were hatched coming to maturity. Whenever they got the use of their wings, they disappeared, and have probably ere this time gone the way of all flesh.'

TREASURE-TROVE.

SOMETHING I've found on my way
Through earth to-day;
Something of value untold,
Brighter than gold;
Something more fair than the tint
Of morning glint;
Something more sweet than the song
Of feathered throng;
Something that lovelier glows
Than queenly rose;
Something more sparkling by far
Than yon bright star;
Something I cherish—how well?
Words cannot tell.
Something—Oh, can you not guess?
Then I confess.
Some one has said 'Love is blind';
Yet do I find,
Deep in the heart of my Love,
My Treasure-Trove!

H. K. W.

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IN A TYPHOON.

OUR experience of a typhoon was during the month of October 1875, when the good steamer *Ara* (belonging to the Messageries Maritimes Company of France) was on her homeward route from Japan to Marseilles. We had left picturesque Hong-kong, with its lights climbing up the sides of the huge Victoria Peak; we had passed through the rocky defile known as the Ly-ee-moon Pass, and were fairly on our way to Saigon in Cochín-China. Passengers and crew together we were some two hundred souls on board; and taking into consideration the fact that our number was composed of twelve different nationalities, we managed to pass those between meal-hours which creep so wearily and heavily even on board the fastest steamers, very agreeably. During the daytime we organised matches of quoits or 'bull-board'—a game which consists in pitching india-rubber pads on to a board divided into differently numbered squares, at some twelve yards' distance. Occasionally we attempted 'deck-tennis,' and even cricket; or we would take violent exercise by walking briskly up and down the deck; or we would lounge, flirt, smoke, read the extraordinary collection of odd volumes which composed the ship's library; and very frequently turn into some easy cane-chair and sleep. After dinner we had music in plenty; for amongst our seamen and Italian fellow-passengers were many who could perform very creditably on the piano, lashed amidships; and if we had been a little less diverse in language, we might have had concerts and theatricals, as on the P. and O. steamers.

The weather for two days was calm, hot, and thoroughly tropical. We had embarked at Yokohama clad in ulsters and glad of a hot drink; we were now in white garments and almost panting for a breeze. Double awnings overhead, which were frequently wetted, scarcely sufficed to keep off the rays of the blistering burning sun during the day; and at night, sleep would only be wooed with success by rigging up beds on deck, away from the stifling oppressiveness of the cabins

below. On the third day a slight breeze sprang up, and a few clouds sped across the dazzling vault of blue sky, as if in flight from some invisible pursuing power. Several passengers incontinently shut themselves up in their cabins, making themselves as miserable as they could by imagination, and refusing to be comforted. (This leads to the parenthetical remark, how wonderfully foreigners can live, eat, and sleep without the aid of fresh air; for of our hundred passengers, all that remained on deck after the violent storm-symptoms above mentioned were a few Englishmen, and a stray Italian silk-merchant on his way home from the purchase of silkworms' eggs in Japan; from annual experience of these seas, doubtless fortified against *mal de mer*. The remainder were luddled together in hot airless cabins, shewing up but at meal-times, or contentedly smoking cigarettes in the full blast of engine-room smells—anywhere out of the pure air and fresh breeze.) So it was for us on deck to discern, by various capricious freaks of wind, sky, and sea, that a change of no ordinary nature was about to take place. With our characteristic insular inquisitiveness about these matters, we would jump from the mess-table and rush on deck at an extra pitch of the vessel or at the sound of an especially big wave against its sides, fearful of losing an iota of the spectacle of which we should shortly be unwilling witnesses, and leaving our foreign fellow-passengers to themselves and their already sketched-out misery.

Towards evening the change grew rapidly. Our captain, an officer of the French navy, no longer headed the festive board in the saloon, but was on the bridge amidships, consulting charts, sending messengers here and there, holding long confabs with the first-officer and the chief engineer, and betraying generally in his manner no slight degree of anxiety. The officers stood in groups eyeing the sky and sea, gesticulating and chattering as only Frenchmen can do when anything out of the ordinary is about to occur. Nor was the aspect of matters around reassuring. The vast glassy expanse of ocean, which had been so monotonous to our gaze for the past two days, was now a seeth-

ing, roaring mass of angry wave-mountains; the sea-birds shrieked as they skimmed the crests of the 'white horses'—sure presage of coming ill; our mast-head tricolours no longer flapped idly against the poles, but stood straight out, straining and quivering in the breeze. Standing at all became entirely conditional on one's power of balance; and there was a nasty heaviness about the air and about the colour of sea and sky which betokened anything but ease and tranquillity. As Englishmen travelling on a French steamer, we were anxious to note the behaviour of the grim, brigandish-looking crew. There were great animation and excitement amongst the officers, very few of whom had probably been trained originally for the sea; but the crew either didn't care, or didn't know about typhoons, or anything foreign to dominoes and dice under shelter of the fore-castle; they had received no orders to provide against contingencies, and so treated matters with indifference.

In the ordinary course of events, at ten P.M. most of the passengers, except a few smokers and a stray loving couple or two, would have been snug in their berths. But on this evening, we—the English coterie—were in full force on deck, smoking and speculating as to the turn matters were about to take. As the night wore on, the slight eccentricity which had hitherto characterised the movements of wind and waves assumed a more definite form. The huge ship pitched and tossed, not with the regular swing of an ordinary high sea, but anyhow and everywhere; the wind screamed through the rigging, and bulged out almost to bursting-point the sails, which were still set as in fair weather. Occasionally a wave would break over the vessel, driving us observers on to stools, chairs, or anything above the level of the deck. Still nothing was done; the officers chattered and gesticulated, the crew went on with their dominoes and dice, hatches were left open, awnings fretted and tugged at their bonds, a sail was blown to ribbons, but the others were still allowed to bulge and groan in the wind.

At length a sudden change took place, and officers frantically rushing about informed us that we had got out of our course and were within the typhoon circle. The rain came down in torrents; incessant flashes of lightning shewed gigantic waves, now burying the vessel in a gulf, with great dark walls far overhead on every side; now lifting her up above the seething abyss that yawned far beneath. Two or three big lurches sent us all sprawling, in company with chairs and divers pieces of loose ship-furniture, to the other side of the deck. Other lurches, not to be outdone, beat us again to our original positions as if we were so many racket-balls. Then the order came to clear the decks, take in sail, and undo the awnings; and as we tottered down the companion-ladder and heard the hatches closed overhead, we felt very much as if we were being packed in a coffin; and, to a man, would have given anything to be allowed to remain in the fury above deck. We then passed three hours, the remembrance of which can never fade from the minds of the passengers per *Ava* in that awful October night. On deck there was at least freedom of movement and fresh air. Crammed as we were into the saloon and cabins, the Black Hole of Calcutta would for the time being, have been

Elysium. At every lurch the whole ship seemed to be breaking up; tables, chairs, portmanteaus, and cabin furniture dashed about, crockery in all directions smashed, forms of huddled-up human beings swept along like ninepins, women shrieking, children crying, and men blaspheming in every known tongue. Standing upright was of course utterly out of the question; being lashed to a table was by no means a safeguard, for tables and benches bound to the deck by clamps of iron yielded to the pressure of huge boxes, and fled in company with other lighter fixtures. All that could be done was to hang on to the head-rail running round the saloon; to have one's head made the sport of the wall, and to submit to one's legs being made the buffers for boxes and trunks, or the pillars to which helpless human beings clung as they were swept along.

This lasted for three hours. At every blow of the huge waves every timber in the ship seemed to creak and proclaim the dissolution of the *Ava* and all on board; sometimes we lurches to such a degree that it seemed impossible that we should ever right. One lurch in particular, which took place about two o'clock in the morning, and which seemed to last five minutes, although it was probably not more than five seconds in duration, is never to be forgotten. Fears were entertained, as we afterwards learned, that the cargo might shift, and at the time of this above-mentioned lurch we were absolutely given up by the officers. Several times we essayed to view matters above deck through one of the after-hatches which had not been fastened, but each time were literally blown down the companion drenched with rain and spray. The big lurch at two o'clock, however, was the height of the typhoon, and by daybreak the sea had moderated so far as to permit of going on deck.

What a scene met our eyes as, after over three hours' imprisonment, we stepped out into the fresh air! In all directions lay scattered about evidences of the fearful violence of the typhoon. The huge iron davits which had supported one of the largest boats were twisted into the semblance of a network of corkscrews. The boat herself had long since disappeared. Our foretopmast was a complete wreck; and the other masts had contributed their quota to the heaps of tackle, blocks, wire-rigging, spars, and tattered sails which encumbered the deck on all sides. But the fore-part of the vessel bore the most decisive testimony to the violence of the typhoon. On this point, as might be expected, the attacks of the waves were mainly concentrated; and it is to be doubted if much domino and dice playing could have been enjoyed by the crew, whose home was in the dark mysterious region at the bows. Nothing apparently had escaped. Sheep-pens, cow-boxes, poultry-houses, all were heaped together in a grand jumble; and our live-stock must have been diminished by a full half, for we could see that many pens, boxes, and houses had been swept away, whilst a very small proportion of the survivors could have been in a fit state to serve as healthy food. One boat had been lifted from its davits and forced through the bulwarks on the opposite side of the ship, where it still stuck. Scarcely a whole untouched yard of bulwark remained, and the sea had evidently made several perfectly clean sweeps of the raised fore-castle, for

there was simply nothing left on it at all. How the raised 'gallery' amidships, on which was the steering-house, escaped it was difficult to understand; and if we felt pretty severely the force of the storm in a second-hand sort of way between decks, what the poor men lashed to the wheel must have experienced during that fearful night, exposed to the full violence of the elements, can scarcely be imagined.

However, all hands went to work willingly to clear up and repair damages; and although it was discovered that we had actually been driven back more than twenty miles, under the influence of fine weather and a moderate sea we soon were at anchor in the sluggish serpentine Saigon River.

Sailors of course experience typhoons frequently enough; but as comparatively few chance travellers even in the China seas have witnessed one, this necessarily short description may not be found uninteresting.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XXXV.—INTRODUCES A NEW ELEMENT.

LORD HARROGATE, as he turned his back on Bundeledund Mansions—on quitting which he caught a glimpse of the redoubtable Colonel Chutnee, corpulent, choleric, and purple-faced, being helped by an obsequious Hindu bearer and a meek London footboy to emerge from the Bath-chair in which he was daily drawn forth for exercise—felt his mind was in a whirl. He had been familiar from his boyhood with the vague outlines of the melancholy history of that young and beautiful Clare, Baroness Harrogate, who had for a short time borne the title which was now his.

It had never occurred to Lord Harrogate to connect Sir Sykes Denzil with the disappearance of the missing child, who, had she lived, would have been in her own right a peeress of England, until Hold's strange words, uttered on the occasion of his visit to the camp, had given rise to strange suspicions. Then he remembered to have heard of savage threats breathed by the present possessor of Carbery Chase against that youthful Lady Harrogate who had been betrothed to him, and who had eloped with Colonel De Vere, her cousin. Hitherto, he had only regarded these menaces as a foolish outburst of ill-temper and bad taste, not at all in accordance with the usual demeanour of the decorous Sir Sykes, and probably forgotten, or only treasured up with shame and regret, by him who spoke them.

Hold's words had made an impression which Lord Harrogate could not shake off; and without giving full credence to the seaman's insinuations, he determined within his own breast that duty urged him to sift this business to the bottom. But what was he to do? To consult the family lawyers was in such a case out of the question. Even had not Sir Sykes been their client, Messrs Pounce and Pontifex were by no means the sort of practitioners whose interest would be easily awakened in such an affair. Their business was with mortgages and marriage settlements, not with murders. Their special mission was to make things comfortable for estates clients, and crime was a monster of which they only read, like other honest folks, in the newspapers.

Still, Lord Harrogate felt the need of profes-

sional assistance in the quest which he had undertaken, and for a minute the vision of a Private Inquiry Office flitted before his mind's eye. Mr Adamopolos or Herr Nicolai, of St Mary Axe and Clerkenwell Green respectively, would either of them cheerfully charge himself with the cracking of a harder nut than this. Then there occurred to Lord Harrogate's mind the saying of a knowing friend, Major Raffleington of the clubs, with whom half the peerage were on speaking terms.

'Hang those men of mystery with their advertisements in the Agony columns, and their highly trained staff of human truffle-dogs, warranted to scent out a scandal in the depths of a coal-pit, if need be! The regular fellows at Scotland Yard are at anyrate under discipline, and so far, more satisfactory to deal with.' Such had been the dictum of Major Raffleington, whose Fall-Mall philosophy was in its narrow way sound enough; and the remembrance of it decided Lord Harrogate as to his course of action. A wandering Hansom cab coming within signalling distance, he beckoned to the driver. 'Scotland Yard!'

At the central police-office of Scotland Yard, Lord Harrogate's reception, when once his name and errand were disclosed, was characterised by that unimpassioned politeness which is traditional with the veteran officers of that blue-coated army of peace to which we look for protection.

In reply to his request for the services of a detective, Lord Harrogate, after a brief delay and the despatch of a special messenger, was introduced to Inspector Drew. Lord Harrogate, like most of us, had read and heard much of detectives, but he had never seen one. That he did see one then, was what it required no trifling exertion of faith to believe. Inspector Drew did not look in the least like a policeman. There was none of that military bearing which some of the guardians of our homes and hearths affect, no air of being a drilled and disciplined champion of social order about him. His plain clothes were very plain, and fitted him loosely withal, nor did he wear the portentous clanking boots to which ordinary detectives cling so tenaciously. A careful, decent sort of person to look upon was Inspector Drew, and one who might easily have been mistaken for a master-carpenter in a small way of business, or a town-traveller in hardware, or a struggling builder with a couple of terraces and a crescent or so, mortgaged and unfinished, always on his mind.

The inspector listened with patient respect to what Lord Harrogate had to say, making brief notes at intervals with a blunt pencil in a burly pocket-book. The questions which he asked were few and very much to the purpose. What seemed to interest him the most were dates and names, whether of persons or places, and these he carefully jotted down, trusting to his memory for the outlines of the story. When the story was concluded, he put up his book and pencil, and smiled deferentially from behind his hat.

'You seem,' said Lord Harrogate, who had noticed the smile, 'not to credit the idea that the child's disappearance was the result of a crime.'

'Well, you see, my lord,' returned the detective, rolling up his handkerchief, which he kept in the crown of his hat, into the semblance of a red cricket-ball, 'there was, so far as I can learn,

no money on it. And where there's no money on it, nine times out of ten there's nothing up.'

Inspector Drew threw into this axiom all the weight of his well-matured conviction on the subject; but his noble employer was less staggered than he, the inspector, had anticipated. It was natural, Lord Harrogate thought, that a policeman should contemplate the world from a policeman's point of view, setting down all offences against person and property to the score of dishonesty or drink; but he himself felt that greed was not the only conceivable motive for a lawless act.

'There is such a thing as revenge,' he said quietly.

'Well, there is,' answered the detective, with frank recognition of an exception to his own somewhat narrow rule of theoretical conduct. 'I have known instances. There's been a grudge, you may say, and there's been a chance. Even, there may have been a little hanging about and lying in wait; but bless you! not much of it.'

'You imply,' said Lord Harrogate, after a moment's consideration, 'that the bestowing of time and thought and care on a malignant purpose is rare, and that most malicious deeds are hasty ones?'

'You've spoken my thoughts, my lord,' said the inspector complacently, 'better than I could have shaped 'em. People don't take trouble, even the trouble to do mischief, gratis.'

But Lord Harrogate was not inclined to defer on this point, even to so high an authority as that of a superior officer of the metropolitan police. To Inspector Drew, who earned his bread by bringing under the lash of justice the rogues who earned *their* bread—or the butter to it—by nefarious industry, deliberate villainy committed neither to save money nor to get money, seemed as unlikely as the dream of a poet. Let there be a pecuniary motive, and the inspector could believe the ugliest story that could be told, but he had no faith in eleemosynary scoundrelism.

Lord Harrogate was of another way of thinking. He had not, in his explanation furnished to the detective, made mention of Sir Sykes Denzil's name; but remembering the baronet's persistent melancholy and Hold's hints, he could not but entertain considerable suspicion as to the real character of the supposed accident that had occurred so long ago. He had little liking for the task on which he found himself, as it were perforce, engaged; but there was in his nature a dash of chivalry, which forbade him to sit with folded hands while a wrong inflicted long ago upon the helpless and unoffending remained unpunished and unrighted.

'I cannot quite agree with you there,' said Lord Harrogate seriously; 'though I am not surprised that you should rely on the teachings of your own experience. Granted that self-interest is the mainspring of most crimes. Coiners and forgers are not amateurs, and people do not pick pockets or practise burglary for mere amusement. But you rather understate the temptations to which an unprincipled man of sufficient education, large means, and ample leisure might succumb, when brooding over a real or fancied injury. I don't know, Inspector, whether I have succeeded in conveying my meaning quite clearly?'

The inspector nodded. 'Idle hands,' he said, with some hazy recollections of the poetry of

Dr Watts, 'do get queer jobs to do, and a queer tradesmaster to teach 'em. And I'm quite ready to admit, my lord, that one man cannot know the world all round, and that there are little games the deepest of us may not be up to. I think your lordship spoke of a bit of a torn letter or a card as having been picked up near the water-side, when the search for the child was in progress?'

No modern student of Assyrian legend lovingly poring over the cuneiform characters on a scrap of Babylonian brick, could have eyed the treasured tablet of inestimable clay with a more scrutinising care than that with which Inspector Drew examined this fragment of yellowed pasteboard. The card, evidently the half of a visiting-card, bore on its face the words—

STANDISH
dier Guards;

and on the back,

WILKINS
ney.

'Wilkins!' muttered the inspector, tapping his forehead, as though that process would arouse or assist his memory. 'I know a few such, but none at this moment likely.—Does your lordship know the hand?'

Lord Harrogate looked at the faded handwriting, coarse but painstaking and legible, and was compelled to own that he did not know it.

'Not a gentleman's hand—is it now?' said the detective critically.

'No,' Lord Harrogate answered, smiling; 'I think not. Many gentlemen write worse, but none, as far as my experience goes, with clumsy carelessness like this.'

'Didn't it strike your lordship as a bit odd,' said Inspector Drew smoothly, 'that a rough chap who handles a pen as a house-painter handles a brush, should have been trying his pot-hooks on the back of what seems to have been the visiting-card of an officer in the Guards?'

The same reflection on his way from Bundelcund Mansions to Scotland Yard, had presented itself to the mind of Lord Harrogate, and he readily said so. It was the inspector's turn to smile.

'If your lordship will condescend to look through these glasses,' he said, handing the card and a horn-rimmed arrangement of lenses across the table, 'I think you'll see a trifle deeper into the millstone than you did.'

And by the aid of the magnifier, which was a powerful one, Lord Harrogate could distinguish the almost obliterated traces of the original pencilled words, in another and more delicate hand, over which the pen-and-ink writing now stood.

'Certainly, the writer may have had this card legitimately in his possession, for aught we know.'

'Real old copper engraved, you see, the card itself, on the face of it,' said the detective with quite an archaeological interest in visiting tickets; 'none of your modern steel plates and stone-cutting, and so forth. But we mustn't go too fast, my lord. Anybody may collar hold of a card to wind fishing-lines upon or thread or anything. An angler, or an old woman knitting stockings, may have dropped this thing, that we study as if it were a thousand-pound note.'

Lord Harrogate thereupon suggested that the Standish in the Grenadier Guards whose name appeared on the card, could, if living, be easily traced, and volunteered to make the necessary inquiries at the War Office if, as seemed likely, the name should prove to figure no longer in the *Army List*. Inspector Drew undertook to put a finger, if possible, on the particular Wilkins referred to in the brief MS. before him, and also to ascertain all that could be learned as to the antecedents of Mr Richard Hold.

'I'd think twice, my lord, before I trusted myself at Pluggers', after dark at any rate,' said the detective gravely, when Lord Harrogate mentioned his purpose of resuming the visit which Hold had paid him in his tent during the autumn campaign. 'I could show you cribs less respectable by a deal where there's less risk for them that have something to lose, than at Pluggers'. If you'd like company when you go there— Ah, well, well! Don't wet your lips with anything you may be offered in the way of liquor, and choose broad day for the trip, if you'll take my advice, my lord.'

CHAPTER XXXVI.—AN UNUSUAL RECEPTION.

That river-side locality of which Pluggers's boarding-house is an ornament did not present a very cheerful aspect on the lowering afternoon of an autumn day, as Lord Harrogate alighted from the cab in which he had been conveyed from the West End to that far eastern suburb wherein was situated Dampier's Row. The sky, draped with leaden-coloured clouds, looked sullenly down upon the leaden-coloured surface of the Thames; and the wind moaned among the shipbreakers' wharves, and the marshy fields where huge old anchors red with rust, and worn-out boilers and crumpled sheets of battered iron lay neglected; and the lazy fog crept along the weedy banks, and curled above the slimy creeks that narrowed as they ran inland.

There were some hours of daylight left; for Lord Harrogate had judged it better to pay some attention to the well-meant warning of Inspector Drew, not to call at 'the captain's' boarding-house after sunset. Arrived in sight of Dampier's Row at last, he recognised the now familiar name of Pluggers on the dimmed brass plate. He rang the bell; and in response to its clangour there appeared at the door a white woolly head, partially covered by a striped nighcap of gay-coloured wool, rakishly set on, a pair of small gold ear-rings such as foreign sailors often wear, and a wrinkled dusky face, the original black of which had faded, as often happens with negroes who have spent many years in temperate latitudes, to a nondescript brown.

'What is there for the service of Monsieur?' asked the subtle janitor of Pluggers, speaking slowly and with a pronounced French accent, and carrying his head in military style to his striped nighcap as he spoke.

'I wish to see a Mr Hold,' returned Lord Harrogate, 'who is, I believe, staying here.'

'Ah! ze capitaine!' smilingly rejoined the old negro, who may very probably have been a ship's cook, and as probably a French-speaking black from Guadeloupe or Martinique. 'Yais; he shall be in. Most of our gentlemen be out though, at dis hour. Ha! Pompey! Nigger!

Steward! Your business to attend door, and I leave my kitchen and my *casseroles* to do your work for you.'

A slim mulatto youth, in a pantry jacket of striped cotton, appeared in answer to this appeal. 'Cap'n Hold?' he said dubiously, on hearing the name of the person in request. 'Him in for sure, but dis child no savvy for certain whether him best please to be disturb now.'

Half-a-crown decided Pompey the steward to conduct the visitor to the presence of the redoubtable Richard; and accordingly he ushered Lord Harrogate along a passage obstructed by palls, dilapidated furniture, and empty lampars, and up a narrow stairway, at the top of which was a door on which a blue anchor—attached to which, in once bright festoons, was a gilded cable—had been painted.

'Is Mr—or Captain—Hold asleep, or what?' asked Lord Harrogate in an undertone, noticing that Pompey hesitated to knock at the door or to turn the handle.

'No, Massa!' whispered the mulatto, rolling his expressive eyes towards the unseen occupants of the room. 'Only dey mortal short-tempered sometimes, after carouse. Dey on spree now—one, two, tree days and nights, four of our cap'ens, and most time to leave off. Suppose dis de finish. Sleep to-night. Wash to-morrow, and sober.'

Lord Harrogate began to doubt whether he did wisely in seeking an interview with a man of Hold's character, who had been, as he gathered from the steward's words, engaged in a drinking-bout of gargantuan dimensions. But he reflected that what he sought for was the truth, and that the buccaner in his cups was more likely to prove communicative than at another time.

'Is this a private room?' asked Lord Harrogate in a low voice.

The dark youth shook his head. 'We keep Blue Anchor,' he said, with somewhat of that childish vanity which goes along with African blood, 'express for gentlemen dat want to go on spree. No 'stablishment longshore here got same 'commodation to offer to gentlemen. Massa like to go in now?'

And as Lord Harrogate assented, the mulatto gently opened the door just wide enough to give admission to the visitor, over whose shoulder he stood on tiptoe to peer, cautiously.

'Hollo! Pompey, you yellow-skinned rascal! what d'ye mean by turning strangers into our cuddy?' hailed a hoarse voice, as copper-visaged Captain Grincher brought his paraboloid eyes and bushy white eyebrows and grim mouth to bear on the intruders. 'Since when can officers finish off their grog comfortable?'

The fierce old kidnapper had snatched from the table a heavy stoneware jug that once had held hot water, and this he was in the act of hurling at the mulatto steward, who ducked promptly, to avoid it, when his angry eyes met the steady gaze of the visitor, and he paused.

'I have not the least wish to intrude upon you, sir,' said Lord Harrogate slowly and with a bow; 'and I beg to apologise for any want of courtesy in the fashion of my entering here. My only desire is to have a few minutes' conversation with a member of your company, Captain Hold, whom I have met with before.'

This unexpected politeness produced an effect on Captain Grincher which probably astonished that veteran evil-doer. He reeled up from his chair and made a clumsy bow, as a white bear, after a course of education from some travelling showman, might have done.

'You're welcome, shipmate, to the Blue Anchor!' said Captain Grincher, more hoarsely than when his husky voice had been raised in menace. 'Any friend of Dick Hold—see, Dick the lubber, isn't ready to answer to his name—is free of quarter-deck and cabin.—Steward, a chair for the gentleman passenger. Bustle there!—And now, mister, put a name to it. Here's whisky; here's the French brandy we used to run in when first I learned to haul a rope; here's peach-stuff from Baltimore; and this'—grasping a jar that stood upon the table, among shattered tobacco-pipes, sodden pools of liquor, dirty glasses, jugs, empty bottles, and lemon-peel—'is the good Jamaica, the king's allowance, as we called it forty year ago, that beats the lot of 'em.'

That Captain Grincher, after his long vigil, was but slightly intoxicated at that moment, was tolerably clear. But Lord Harrogate's chief interest was in the other members of the group, one of whom, snoring heavily, reclined on a horse-hair sofa; while a second, of spare form and with long dark hair tossed wildly to and fro, was rocking himself slowly and with a low crooning cry in his chair; and a third crouched, leaning on the table, his head buried between his arms.

'Hillo! Dick! rouse up!' shouted Captain Grincher, employing his two hands as an improvised speaking-trumpet.—'And you Sam, avast that whimpering noise, like a sick hound in the moonshine, Cuba-way.'

With the perversity of an intoxicated man, the person addressed, and who, as he rocked himself to and fro, had kept up but a low moaning cry, now burst out shrilly: 'Keep them off! Kill them! Don't let them gibber at a white man like that, with their ugly black faces and grinning ivories. Only a lot of niggers, warnt they? Answer me that, you precious partners, that don't stir a finger to beat back the pack of them from me!'

'Wouldn't you say,' remarked old Captain Grincher with infinite disgust, 'that a fellow who can let a set of niggers—rubbed out in Texas years and years ago, when he was outlawed after the war, and the slaves were set free and given lands—weigh upon him that way, wasn't fit to handle a ship in dirty weather? Yet when he hasn't got too much of the Bourbon aboard, Sam Barks is a man. 'Tis in the education of him, ye see—coming of chapel-going parents—the difference lies! I'm of the old breed. Blacks, live or dead, don't trouble me, although more than once, in the South Seas, I've—'

'Ware, mate!' interrupted the deep voice of Richard Hold, as that reputable person lifted his haggard head, which had hitherto been pillowed on his arms, and looked around him with a dawning intelligence in his bloodshot eyes. 'You oughter know by this, what tales it's best not to tell out of school.'

Captain Grincher, though he took the advice in dudgeon, so far profited by it as to abstain from any definite statement as to his Polynesian experiences.

'You remember me, Mr Hold?' said Lord Harrogate, as he saw the light of recognition kindle in Richard's red eyes, as they blinkingly scanned the face of the visitor. The master-mariner did not immediately reply, but for some thirty seconds or so stared at Lord Harrogate with the dull menace which we may often note in the glaring eyes of an over-driven ox. Then, with shaking hand, he clutched a bottle at his elbow and pouring out a glassful of the fiery spirit which it contained, tossed it off as if it had been pure water, and then, with a hand that shook no more, replenished the glass and drank a portion of its contents. He was evidently by a great effort of the will shaking off, as hardened toppers can sometimes do, the effects of the debauch.

'I have come,' pursued Lord Harrogate, 'just to talk over with you, if you are willing, the matter on which you spoke to me at the bivouac in Woolmer Forest. If another time or place would'—

'No! confound it, no!' broke in Hold huskily, but coherently enough. 'I talked, I'm afraid, sad rubbish when I beat up your quarters, and I ask your pardon, I'm sure, for the trouble I gave you. Fact is—I'd been drinking, and drinking just enough to set my tongue going. Fact is too, I was vexed then with a party that shall be nameless, and being, as I said, the worse for liquor, dragged his name into my yarn. Don't you mind it, mister! I'm not quite myself when I've had a glass too much—or too little. What I said ain't no more worth remembering than the chatter of the monkeys. Dick Hold's famous for it—Isn't he, Grincher?'

Captain Grincher met this appeal with a string of muttered maledictions of a sweeping character, and tinkling the tea-spoon in his tumbler, tossed off the remainder of his grog; while the American, still swaying himself to and fro, set up a yelp like that of a dog in pain.

'If you would give me a few moments' conversation,' Lord Harrogate began; but Dick sullenly cut him short with: 'Taint no manner of use. You think perhaps, because you're a soldier-officer and have a handle to your name, you can order a fellow like me as I'd order the steward, Pompey there, to bring me a can of punch. If so, I'—

'Come, come, Mr Hold, we need not quarrel,' replied Lord Harrogate, with imperturbable good-humour. 'I listened to you patiently enough the other night, you know.'

'And that's true too,' said Hold, dropping his voice to a lower key. 'Twarn't you that sought me before I was blockhead enough to— Well! sir, or my lord, I bear no malice. Better pass a wet sponge over that part of your memory where you've scored up what concerns Dick Hold, that's all!'

He drank off the residue of the whisky in his glass as he spoke, and snapping his fingers, leaned heavily back in his chair, and confronted his visitor with an air of impenetrable obstinacy. It was plainly useless to ply him with argument or question.

'If ever you see cause to change your mind, Captain Hold,' said Lord Harrogate as he rose, 'I shall be glad to hear from you.'

Hold nodded doggedly. But old Captain Grincher insisted on accompanying the guest to the

head of the stairs, and in roaring for Pompey, under threat of rope's-ending, to appear and shew the gentleman to the street door.

'We're not savages,' said the veteran apologetically. 'We can keep a civil tongue in our heads, at Pluggers', for such as are civil to us.—Ahoy! dinky! snowball! I'll put a little life into you if you don't tumble up smarter when I call.—Good-day, shipmet!'

And Captain Grincher went back to his symposium in the Blue Anchor, leaving Lord Harrogate, under Pompey's guidance, to thread his way to the front-door, and emerge at length upon the dank pavement of Dampier's Row.

PAMPHLETS.

PAMPHLETS—the name given to one or a few printed sheets, and for the most part on subjects of transitory interest—do not now command any great measure of respect. They are an antiquated method of bringing matters under public notice, and have been largely superseded by the newspapers. To understand the history of pamphlets, we must carry the mind back to the seventeenth century, when newspapers were scarcely known, and (what is more significant) when the press was placed under severe legal restraints. At that time, pamphlets embodying the opinions of political or theological partisans were in numerous instances privately printed and scattered about profusely on the streets of London. When men did not dare to express their opinions openly, and when no printer or publisher would put his name to incubations of doubtful tendency, secret presses in the back-rooms of private dwellings were throwing off hundreds of pamphlets to be furtively disseminated among the populace. It was no unusual thing in a morning to see Cheapside and Fleet Street scattered with pamphlets, to be picked up by anybody, and of the origin of which no one was aware. So far as the pamphlets of old times have been preserved, they present a curious historical record. Without consulting them, an historian would have but an imperfect idea of the convulsed state of feeling in past times—for be it always kept in mind that newspapers and other popular engines of intelligence and controversy are but of comparatively modern date.

The British Museum contains one of the largest, finest, and most valuable collection of political pamphlets in the world. We do not say the very largest, because possibly the National Library at Paris contains a still more extensive collection, referring to events during the great French Revolution. The vast collection in the British Museum refers principally to the middle of the seventeenth century, when Charles I. began to be in collision with his people, and continued nearly till the Restoration of his son. The twenty years from 1640 to 1660 were peculiarly the age of pamphleteers; though it is proper to say that pamphlets were fired off without stint so long as the Stuarts were on the throne. It is interesting to take a retrospective glance at these old pamphleteering times.

In 1640, among the booksellers of London was Mr Thomason, Thomlinson, or Tomlinson—all three modes of spelling being adopted, but with the best claim to correctness for the first. He conceived the idea of collecting copies of all the pamphlets which appeared in great number about that time, as permanent records of men's opinions, arguments, and policy. As soon as he had purchased (sometimes at great cost, owing to being what publishers call 'out of print') the pamphlets of preceding years, others appeared in still increasing number. The first blood of the Civil War, shed in 1642; the surrender of Charles as a prisoner in 1646; his execution in 1649; the dissolution of the parliament, and the assumption of power by Cromwell—all gave Thomason a full amount of work to do, in collecting copies of the pamphlets which issued every day from the press. And so he continued his labours till 1660, amid heavy expenditure, personal danger, and almost insurmountable difficulties.

There was the collection; but—what to do with it? Like the white elephant from Siam, and like the Vicar of Wakefield's big picture, room had to be found for it. Thomason was well served by confidential agents, who managed to conceal from the authorities the fact that the heap was constantly increasing. At last the difficulty of concealment became very trying, and had to be met by various manoeuvres. The Puritans being in power through the greater part of the period, and intensely hostile to the royalists, it became a matter of much peril to include royalist pamphlets in the collection; and yet without such inclusion the collection would be shorn of half its value. Thomason narrowly watched the movements of the Puritan armies; when they went north, he carried his costly collection south; when they went east, he went west. But the more bulky the collection became, the more difficult was it to move about in this way. At one time he had some idea of sending the pamphlets for safety to Holland; but he dreaded the perils of the sea. At last he hit upon a whimsical and successful expedient. He caused the pamphlets to be packed in solid heaps resembling tables, placed around the walls of a large storeroom or warehouse, and covered with canvas. Although often suspected, no one betrayed him. On one occasion he was imprisoned for seven weeks by the Puritans; but his secret never leaked out.

There is reason to believe that some of the royalists had a surmise concerning the existence of the Thomason Collection. In 1647 the king, while travelling as a prisoner towards the Isle of Wight, had one of the pamphlets in his possession. While still at Hampton Court, he desired to see this particular pamphlet; and Thomason sent it to him on loan, though with some misgiving as to its safety. After a time the pamphlet was returned, with the king's earnest exhortation to Thomason to continue the collection. The collector afterwards printed a remarkable memorandum

concerning this incident. When two gentlemen of the court came to him to borrow the pamphlet for the king, he told them that all he had was at His Majesty's command, but nevertheless expressed some apprehension—'presuming that when His Majesty had done with it, little account would be made of it, and if I should lose it, by that loss I should lose a limb of my collection, which I should be very sorry to see, well knowing it would be impossible to supply it if it should happen to be lost.' His fears, though happily relieved, were not wholly groundless; for the king let the volume fall in the mud while journeying as a prisoner to Carisbrooke. The particular volume that contained this pamphlet has been examined much more recently, and found to have a great number of stains on the edges of the leaves, some more than an inch in depth. When we consider the state of the roads at that period, we may imagine the plight into which a book would be brought by dropping into a slough of mud from the hand of a horseman.

After the hapless king's death and the assumption of the Protectorate by Cromwell, Thomason found his own warehouse no longer a safe repository for his pamphlets. He made a pretended sale of the collection (so far as it had gone at that time, 1653) to the University of Oxford, as being better able to bear up against any prosecution that might be waged. So far as we can judge, he continued to add to the collection for seven years longer, and to send the additions to Oxford.

Mr Thomason died in the year of the Great Fire of London, 1666; and his really precious collection was still at Oxford. By his will he left it in trust for the benefit of his children. But now came on another series of troubles, commercial not political. What was the value of the collection? Who could tell? As there was no other such collection in existence, it was really priceless in that sense; while, if we adopt the rule that

The value of a thing
Is what it will bring,

then it required to be ascertained what the collection would really bring in money. The collection was bought some years afterwards by Mearne the bookseller, at a price which does not seem to have been placed upon record, for Charles II.; but the king, not willing to keep pamphlets which dwelt so much on the unhappy years of his early life, allowed Mrs Mearne, after her husband's death, to sell them at the best obtainable price. It was said that the collection had been so highly priced as to lead to the refusal of four thousand pounds for it. But the market, to use a commercial phrase, was lost. As time wore on, fewer and fewer persons cared about the matter. When the Stuarts had given way to the House of Orange, and this to Anne, and this to the House of Hanover, the memory of the old Cromwell days died out. Oldys the historical antiquary valued the collection at no more than one-twentieth part of the above-named sum. In 1745 it still remained in the possession of a member of the Mearne family, Mr Sisson. From him it passed to his sister, Miss Sisson; and at length George III., shortly after his ascent to the throne, purchased the collection for a sum of between three and four hundred pounds.

Thus ended the trading or commercial history

of the Thomason pamphlets. What would the collector have thought, if he could have foreseen that a king of England would obtain such a collection for so little money—a collection that had involved twenty years of labour, research, difficulty, and personal danger! George III. presented them (the best part of the transaction) to the British Museum, in trust for the British nation.

At what time they were uniformly bound up into a series is not exactly recorded. They are bound in two thousand volumes, the octavos being brought together; and the small quartos, large quartos, and folios similarly treated.

The reader will have no difficulty in believing that these remarkable pamphlets touch all sides of the burning questions which agitated the public mind in the middle of the seventeenth century. Controversial theology and ecclesiastical rivalry had their share as well as party wrangling and great political questions. Some of those for 1642 are thus headed—'Newes out of y^e Lowe Countreye, in two letters, one to y^e Earl of Newcastle, y^e other to Captain Crisp.'—'A Relation of a Victorie obtained by Sir R. Hopton over my Lord of Stamford in Cornwall.'—'Ye Humble Petition of y^e best affected Ministers of y^e City of London to y^e Lords and Commons.'—'Some Wiser than Some, or a display of y^e times past and present.'—'Mr Corbett's Fast Sermon before y^e House of Commons.' One title suffices to shew how the Royalists and Roundheads belaboured one another, at a time when it had not yet become dangerous for the former to speak out—'An exact description of a Roundhead and a Long-head Shag-poll, taken out of the finest Antiquities and Records'; it was written to confute 'The Ridiculous, Absurd, and beyond comparison most foolish baffle-headed Pamphlets sent into the World by a Stinking Locust.' A pretty foretaste here of the language likely to be employed in the pamphlet itself.

Passing over the greater part of the period covered by the Thomason Collection, we see what an altered state of public feeling marked 1680 and one or two subsequent years—'The Relation of His Majestie's Entertainment passing through the City of London to his Coronation.'—'Neptune's Address to His most Sacred Majesty Charles the Second, for severall Shows upon the Water before Whitehall.'—'The Fortunate Change; being a Panegyrick to His Sacred Majesty upon his Coronation.'—'Verses on the blessed and happy Coronation of Charles the Second.'—'A Poem on St James his Park, as lately improved by His Majesty.'—'An Ode on the fair Weather that attended His Majesty on his Birthday and his Coronation.'—'A Hymne called England's Hosanna to God, in imitation of the Song Sung by the Angels, Glory to God,' &c.

Lord Macaulay is known to have made use of this unique and extensive collection in preparing the materials for the opening chapters of his *History of England*; he well knew the value of such pamphlets as exponents of the opinions and feelings of men at the times of which he was writing. Isaac Disraeli remarked justly enough, that it is not alone the political world which we find mirrored in such pamphlets. 'They enter into every object of human thought. The silent revolutions in manners, language, habits, are set before us. The interest which some take in novel sub-

jects of discovery would be wholly lost were it not for these records; and indeed it is the multiplicity of pamphlets on a particular topic or object which appear at a particular period that offers the truest picture of public opinion. Many men eminent in rank, or who, from their position, have never written anything else, have written a pamphlet; and as the motive must be urgent which induces any such to have recourse to this plan, so is the matter of deeper interest; and it has often happened that the public have thus derived information which else had not reached them. The heads of parties have sometimes issued these as manifestoes; and the tails have sometimes let out secrets for which they have been reprimanded.

A SCARE IN CONNEMARA.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

ON resuming our journey, my two Irish friends became more particular in their inquiries, and my slumbering fears were again roused. As we were creeping on the road towards Letterfrack, they became more confidential in their conversation, and more mysterious in their manner. One of them slyly whispered to me that he had penetrated my disguise; that he and his friend knew what my errand was in that district; that I was 'Captain O'Connor,' and that both they and the other 'Nationalist boys' would be very glad to see me. I was foolish enough, in the first instance, to feel flattered at being taken for a renowned Fenian leader, and believe that I to some extent encouraged the deception by pretending to be as mysterious as my two inexplicable friends. But as their apparent cordiality increased, my own courage began to be correspondingly depressed, until at length I felt—Bob Acres-like—as if it was all oozing out at my finger-ends. At each renewed compliment to myself personally and to the great patriotic cause I was supposed to have so fervently at heart, I only made disjointed and evasive replies, which might either have done duty for studiously concealed mysteries—which they were not—or for heart-sick and apprehensive fears, which they undoubtedly were. We were now skirting the celebrated Twelve Pins of Connemara, and though the scenery was at some points almost awful from its majestic solemnity and sublimity, I was in no mood for its enjoyment, wriggled uneasily in my seat, and prayed fervently for our arrival at Clifden, where I fondly hoped I should see the last of my pertinacious tormentors.

In the meantime Morrissey and Hanlon appeared to be in the full current of enjoyment. They were 'keeping their spirits up by pouring spirits down,' and at each post-station they were always ready, as they said, to stretch their legs and 'put themselves outside of a pint of stout' or 'a naggin of whisky.' As the afternoon waned, the weather became delightfully fine; and at every turn of the road we encountered some new reach of mountain scenery, or noticed with pleasure the sun's rays broken and diverted by passing clouds into little exquisite bits of chromatic effect, which were as marvellous in their realistic influences as some of Turner's most delicious, but sometimes pronounced impossible masses of colouring.

Arrived at length at Clifden, we found that town finely located on an inlet from the Atlantic, quite a model place as far as regards buildings both public and private, and rich in picturesque scenery, both wildly natural and artificially created. And though my two Hibernian car-companions joined us at the dinner-table, that meal, to which hunger was the pleasantest sauce imaginable, passed off very agreeably, even though I was troubled to find that Morrissey and Hanlon again evinced a disposition to travel over the dangerous ground of national politics. We were subsequently standing on a rocky knoll overlooking the sea, admiring the gorgeously empurpled sunset, when we heard the noise of an approaching car, and on turning our eyes in the direction of the hotel were astonished to see Mr Doolan on a private conveyance, and accompanied by a couple of the Royal Irish Constabulary in full uniform. In answer to our frank expressions of welcome, I noticed that his demeanour was somewhat distant and repelling in its character, for he peremptorily checked our cordial advances by requesting the pleasure of our company at once in a private room of the hotel.

When we had there assembled, an anxious and expectant group, Doolan broke the silence by remarking: 'Perhaps you are not aware, gentlemen, that I am an officer of the Irish Constabulary?'

'I had not the least idea of it,' I replied—for Morrissey and Hanlon were almost dumbfounded, and unable to get out a word. 'But if you are an inspector, what has that to do with us?' 'Our withers are unwrung,' I added, in a mock-theatrical manner.

'That we shall probably ascertain by-and-by,' continued Doolan; 'but in the meantime it is my duty to ask you a few questions.—You are an Irishman, Mr Morrissey; what is your present business in Ireland? What is your little game in this district?'

Morrissey, whose deafness, either real or assumed, here stood him in good service, replied, as if in echo of the constable's question: 'I don't know what game there is in this district, except lares and rabbits, and a few trouts in the mountain streams.'

'By what name do you call yourself now?' resumed Doolan.

'I call myself an Irishman,' Morrissey replied with a grin.

'Where are you now established?'

'I am not established at all, at all,' continued Morrissey; 'I am disestablished at present, and want an establishment.'

'Why are you travelling here in Connemara?' said Doolan, whose face was now getting browned from loss of temper.

'I have not been in Mayo for many a year—not since 1847,' answered Morrissey.

'What took you to the States?'

'The ship that crossed the ocean,' replied Morrissey.

'Were you not obliged to leave the country?' demanded Doolan, with particular emphasis.

'You would be obliged if I would leave the country,' repeated Morrissey, stupidly scratching his poll. 'Well, I shall leave when I am ready, and not before.'

Doolan, severely: 'Are you not a "Young Irishman"?'

Morrissey: 'Shure if I am a "Young Irishman," it is of old standing, since I am now fifty years of age.'

This last sally provoked a laugh, and even Doolan's risibilities appeared to be somewhat tickled, but he continued his examination by asking: 'Now, no nonsense! You are here on secret national business, I opine. Do you not belong to a secret society?'

'I know and belong to several secret societies,' responded Morrissey, with a comical expression of countenance. 'I am an Odd Fellow, an Ancient Druid, a member of the Ancient Order of Antediluvian Buffaloes, and I also belong to the Honourable Society of Owlets or Fly-by-nights, in the town of Fleeceborough, in Yorkshire, England.'

Here I could control myself no longer, but broke out in a hearty guffaw. Doolan pursed up his brows with meditative severity, and then told Morrissey that the language he and Hanlon had used at Westport was certainly seditious; that he had felt it his duty to consult his superior officer respecting it; that he had since seen Mr Sarsfield, a justice of the peace, and had from that gentleman obtained an authority to detain all three of us, on suspicion of being Irish Americans engaged in constructive-treason-felony; and that particular and private inquiries had been instituted in Yorkshire about Morrissey and myself, but that no reply had yet been received to the telegrams. Doolan added that he had obtained our names and addresses from our luggage at the Westport hotel, and that, pending further information respecting us, we were to consider ourselves in custody. The two Irishmen who had been so particularly inquisitive about my concerns during the car-ride, here entered the room, in answer to an almost imperceptible signal from Mister Doolan, and proceeded to close up to us, as if they were awaiting an order for putting on the handcuffs. That last extreme order, however, was not yet given.

Here was a dilemma! Morrissey and I were anxious to get on to Galway without any loss of time. We there expected letters, as well as instructions as to whether our holiday could be prolonged; and all our arrangements appeared likely to be knocked on the head, all because a couple of soft-headed and soft-hearted Irishmen could not avoid talking politics over their whisky, and could not avoid fraternising 'at home in ould Ireland,' when so far away from their respective homes. The mischief was now out. My suspicions had not been groundless at Westport. Our party had had their fling, and now they must be prepared to pay the piper.

The next victim for cross-examination was Hanlon. He had pulled himself together better than I expected under the circumstances; and though his behaviour under the crucial test of questioning was characterised by a certain amount of happy audacity, there was an evident air of sincerity in his answers, that appeared to embarrass Doolan not a little. It is true that that constable was fully protected against consequences. Not only had he the authority of his superior officer and of a justice of the peace to back him, but he had also the law on his side; for Mayo had then been 'proclaimed,' and the servants of the crown were supported in many essential particulars

in the commission of acts which would be condemned as 'false imprisonments' in England. Not on this account, therefore, was it that Doolan was troubled in spirit. No! it was because he was an Irishman, and keenly sensitive to ridicule; and he appeared to contemplate the possibility that he had discovered that terrible product of over-zeal, a 'mare's nest.' He, however, soon again screwed up his courage, and at once placed Hanlon on the rack.

I confess that even if I tried ever so much, I should utterly fail to reproduce the scene that ensued in all its serious as well as its humorous aspects. Both were sons racy of the soil, keen-witted, sarcastic, earnest, and eager for the mental encounter; and though Doolan endeavoured to preserve the 'vantage-ground' given him by judicial authority, he was from time to time stung into remembering that he was, after all, but a man, although happening to be 'clothed in a little brief authority.' He several times lost his temper for a moment, and could only recover himself at a sacrifice. Asked why he had come to Ireland after such a long sojourn at Baltimore, United States, Hanlon replied that he had been fortunate in business; that he was not so young as he once was; and that he felt a great yearning to see the 'ould counthry' again, and before he returned for good to his American home. This was a decided hit for Hanlon, for he had unconsciously struck the chord of love of country which vibrates in every true man's breast; and even Doolan was obliged to acknowledge the humanising and patriotic sentiment. Questioned as to his reasons for bringing with him an American repeating-rifle and revolver, Hanlon answered that they were presents from the new country to his brother in Limerick, whose name and address he then and there openly proclaimed. As to the watch, with its emblazonment of Irish harp and shamrock, he maliciously asked Doolan if a true Irishman was to be blamed for carrying a scientific toy which so vividly illustrated his love for Ireland, though he, when at his new home, was some thousands of miles away from the dear old soil. In conclusion, he politely informed Mister Doolan that he was a large floor-cloth manufacturer in Baltimore, employing some couple of hundred hands, and that he should be glad to execute a large wholesale order for every workhouse, prison, and lunatic asylum in that part of the country! As this information was emphatically and convincingly poured forth by the now impassioned Hanlon, I stole a glance at Doolan, and could scarcely help pitying that unfortunate official. It was evident that he was staggered by the new complexion put upon the affair; and though he could not feel feeling that he had been warranted in the extreme steps he had taken, he was unable to satisfy his own mind that the explanations given by Hanlon and Morrissey were not full and explicit enough, and certainly bore the impress of truth upon the face of them. The two subordinate constables appeared to enjoy the perplexity of their superior officer, but were too well disciplined to shew it, except by mobile facial contortions, which at times they were unable altogether to control.

As the youngest member of the company I here ventured to suggest that we should partake of a little refreshment. I asked if such long palavers

were not very dry work, and whether it would not be better to discuss the matter more quietly over a glass of grog, adding that if things came to the worst the *status quo* could at any moment be resumed, and that no disadvantage could attach to either policemen or politicians in the meantime. This suggestion gave Doolan a respite, for which he was evidently grateful; but he made this remark respecting it: 'I may as well inform you, Mr Morrissey and Mr Talbot, that I have telegraphed respecting you to the municipal authorities at Fleeceborough, and that I expect an answer every moment.'

Although I immediately felt the impropriety of the remark, and found that I had no sooner opened my mouth than I had, Pat-like, 'put my foot into it.' I could not for the life of me help remarking: 'I am glad you have taken that step, Doolan, for I am a man well known to the police at Fleeceborough.'

Doolan glanced at me with astonishment when I made this unhappy observation. It instantly revived his latent suspicions. A man with an intimate knowledge of the police could only be a suspicious character—such was certainly his Irish experience of such cases. I was asked for an explanation, and promptly furnished it. I stated that my business avocations brought me into daily intercourse not only with the police but the magistrates of my native town in Yorkshire; and after I had shewn and satisfied him that this could be a state of things that could exist without danger to the State or treachery and treason to the Crown, his brows again unbent, and whilst he somewhat coldly admitted my plea, he censured me for my imprudence in speaking thus flippantly of powers and constituted authorities.

'And now,' Doolan continued, 'I shall be able to see my way more clearly if your credentials of respectability are only supported by the evidence of your Mayor and your Superintendent of Police.'

Just at this juncture a telegraph messenger entered the room and handed a telegram to Doolan. It was from the Police Superintendent of Fleeceborough, and ran as follows:

POST-OFFICE TELEGRAPH. *From Post Fetterlock, Superintendent of Police, Fleeceborough, Yorkshire.—To Dominick Doolan, Royal Irish Constabulary, Leenane or Clifden, Ireland.*—Morrissey and Talbot are neither American Irish nor Fenians. They are respectable citizens in this town, fond of spouting, but with no treason about them. Remember me kindly to Talbot.'

This communication was so far satisfactory that Doolan at once held out his hand to Morrissey and myself, and begged our pardon for the trouble and annoyance he had given us. The two stern constables moved off to a respectful distance, and appeared as if they would like to quench their thirst. The hint was not lost; and although the three members of that model force (for so it is in my respects), the Royal Irish Constabulary, were exceedingly modest in their addresses to the potent liquor, the effect was seen in their increased courtesy and kindness, and in the agreeableness of their conversation, which was extended to a late hour of the night. But Hanlon was still under a cloud; Mister Doolan had, however, despatched another message to Limerick; and early next morning an answer was received which fully bore out Hanlon's account of himself, and removed

the last lingering taint of suspicion from his honest name.

There is a smart six-oared police galley in the bay at Clifden; and after visiting the Owenglen Falls and Clifden Castle (proudly perched on an eminence in the town), the half-dozen of us pulled down the stream towards the Atlantic, and raced gaily with the Inland Revenue boat, which was also fully manned in honour of the occasion. We did not resume the car to Galway that day, but lingered about sweet Clifden; and afterwards exchanged many a joke and song over the temperately imbibed liquids. The afternoon of the next day found us in Galway, where we got our letters and our extended leave of absence. This we utilised by steaming up Lough Corrib to the ancient and interesting archaeological demesne of Cong. Four days afterwards, Morrissey and I were again among the long chimneys and the vitiated atmosphere of Fleeceborough; and Hanlon was with his friends at Limerick.

CURIOUS CHANCES.

IN a former paper we drew attention to the Romance of Accident as illustrated by the important results often arising from trivial circumstances. The breadth of a hair, the turning of a straw, may make all the difference between success and failure; and the following incidents, as further examples of the manner in which a certain amount of chance seems to reign over human affairs, may not be uninteresting to our readers.

Though Valentine Jamemi, better known as Duval, the orphan shepherd-boy, early displayed such an eager thirst for knowledge, the after-success of his life was mainly owing to an accidental circumstance. When cattle-keeper to the hermits of St Anne, near Linnéville, he was one day discovered by two noblemen studying geography under a tree with his maps spread out before him. So pleased were they with his conversation, that they introduced him to the Duke of Lorraine, who sent him to college, and afterwards made him his librarian. The Duke proved a kind patron, for not content with that, he eventually procured him the situation of Keeper of the Books and Medals of the Imperial Cabinet of Vienna; in which capacity he published several learned works on Coins.

John Mole, an Englishman noted for his skill in rapid calculation, was indebted to chance for the discovery of his talent. When in the humble capacity of a farm-servant, he was sent to a carpenter's shop for a load of timber. A workman asked him whether he could tell how many cubical quarters of inches could be cut out of a solid foot of wood; upon which Mole replied he could tell how many could be cut out of ten thousand solid feet. He then answered the question, How many farthings there were in a million of moldores, of the value of twenty-seven shillings each. From that time he applied diligently to acquire a knowledge of figures, and became eminent for his skill in algebra.—Another gifted mathematician, Edmund Stone, obtained

the powerful patronage of the Duke of Argyll through that nobleman chancing to discover him, when a youth of eighteen, reading Newton's *Principia*. Conversing with him, the Duke was astonished to learn that this gardener's son had already made considerable progress in arithmetic, geometry, Latin, and French. Pleased with his young countryman, the Duke took him under his protection, and placed him in a situation to continue his studies. Nor was the nobleman's kindness thrown away, for his *protégé* produced several mathematical works, and was chosen F.R.S. in 1725.

The early fortunes of Torrigiano, a distinguished Italian sculptor, hinged apparently on a blow of his fist. When a fellow-student with Michael Angelo in the gardens of St Mark, on a dispute one day arising between them, he struck a savage blow, which happened to break his companion's nose. Compelled to quit Florence, he first worked at Rome, and then became a soldier, and served under Cæsar Borgin. He afterwards obtained great reputation in England as a sculptor, his tomb of Henry VII. in Westminster Abbey being called by Bacon 'one of the stateliest and daintiest monuments in Europe.'—As Raleigh was advanced in the royal favour through his gallantry when his sovereign chanced to hesitate in crossing a puddle, so Potemkin became one of the Russian Empress's especial 'favourites' through a little act of attention on his part. Catharine II. after taking the sceptre from her weak husband, paraded the streets of St Petersburg sword in hand. Young Potemkin, then of a manly appearance, well made and handsome, happened to notice that the sword which the Empress used was without the sword-knot—a mark of distinction attached to the swords of northern commanders—instantly detached his, and presented it with a grace that was highly pleasing to Catharine; and from that day his promotion increased rapidly.

Eliza Rachel, a celebrated *tragedienne*, might have dragged out a precarious living by singing in the streets, had not her voice chanced to attract the notice of some connoisseurs, who kindly placed her under the tuition of Charon, a celebrated singing-master. Soon giving evidence of great tragic power, she made her appearance at the Théâtre Français; but though her début was not auspicious, the sharp critical eyes of M. Jules Janin soon discovered in her a worthy interpreter of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Racine and Corneille; and his criticism on her acting resulted in her afterwards reaping both fame and wealth wherever she appeared.

Chance not only has much to do at times with furthering men's progress in life, but has frequently been the cause of their adopting those very callings in which they have afterwards become famous. When George Stephenson worked as a pit engine-boy at twopence a day's wages, it was a lucky accident that gave him the opportunity of shewing his skill, and in thus leading to

his advancement to the office of engineman, paved the way to the successful career that subsequently distinguished him.—Sir Robert Wilson, a general of distinction, who began life in a solicitor's office, would in all likelihood have adopted the law as his profession, had it not been for a chance introduction to the Duke of York, which changed what might have been an indifferent lawyer into an able general. Thus induced to exchange the desk for the field, he made his appearance in Flanders in 1793, and bore a conspicuous part in all the cavalry actions of that campaign, which was the beginning of his subsequent varied and gallant career.

By a chance circumstance was Galileo's attention directed to the equal duration of the oscillation of the pendulum. Happening to be one day in the cathedral of Pisa, he remarked the regulated and periodical motion of a lamp suspended from the roof of the nave. By repeated experiments, he confirmed the fact of the equal duration of its oscillation, and at once comprehended that this phenomenon might be employed to serve as an exact measure of time. Fifty years afterwards he made use of this idea for the construction of a clock intended for astronomical observations.—'My taste for mechanics,' says Mr James Ferguson in a sketch of his life, 'arose from an accident. When about eight years of age, a part of the roof of the house being decayed, my father applied a prop and lever to an upright spar, and to my great astonishment, I saw him lift up the ponderous roof as if it had been a small weight. Thinking further of the matter, I began making levers, and wrote out a short account of two lifting-machines of my own invention, sketched out figures of them, and imagined it to be the first treatise of the kind that ever was written.' From such small beginnings did that knowledge spring for which he was afterwards so justly renowned.

The idea of using gas as being lighter than air for balloons, is said to have been suggested to Jacques Montgolfier by a work of Priestley's. It is also narrated that one day while boiling water in a coffee-pot, the top of which was covered with paper folded in a spherical form, Jacques saw the paper swell and rise; and that hence he took the idea of a light machine made buoyant by inflation, and traversing the air. Ascertaining that a balloon and car could be kept suspended by a supply of heated air, after some experiments Jacques and his brother made a successful ascent at Versailles, in presence of the royal family and numerous spectators.—Alexander Cozens, a landscape-painter, taught what may truly be called chance-sketching, which he is supposed to have adopted from a hint of Leonardo da Vinci. His process was to dash out on several pieces of paper a number of accidental large blots and loose flourishes, from which he selected forms, and sometimes produced very grand ideas; but they were in general rather indefinite in their execution, and not always pleasing in colour.—While on this part of our subject, we may remind the reader that the discovery of San Salvador was, we are told, in a measure owing to the flight of some parrots in that direction, which Pinzon, the captain of the caravel *Pinta*, observing, he induced Columbus to alter his intended course and steer to the south-west.

Chance in many instances seems to have exercised its sway over the domain of literary and other projects, of which the experience of Sydney Smith may be taken as an illustration. When in Edinburgh during the agitated state of society consequent on the principles of the French Revolution becoming propagated, he there became acquainted with Lord Jeffrey, Lord Murray, and Lord Brougham, all of whom maintained liberal opinions upon political subjects. In his own words: 'One day we happened to meet in the eighth or ninth flat in Buccleuch Place, the elevated residence of the then Mr Jeffrey; I proposed that we should set up a "Review." This was acceded to with acclamation. I was appointed editor, and remained long enough in Edinburgh to edit the first number.' In this way is the *Edinburgh Review* said to have originated.—William Spence while engaged in business at Hull embraced a casual opportunity of sending a present of a few insects to the Rev. W. Kirby at Barham. This trivial incident we are told laid the foundation of a lifelong friendship, of which the memory will be preserved in their joint work entitled *Introduction to Entomology*, a work written in the form of letters, which became immediately popular, and has continued to be so to the present time.

Chance works very favourably at times in the acquisition of wealth and property for those who least expect such luck. A Versailles wine-shopkeeper was at work in his cellar when suddenly the ground gave way, and he fell into what was at first thought to be a well; but on lights being brought, the hole was found to be the entrance to another wine-cellar, containing some of the best vintages of France and Spain. The archaeologists of Versailles were aroused; and their examination proves that this mysterious subterranean wine-cellar formed part of the Pavillon du Rendezvous, which Louis XV. annexed to the Parc-aux-Cerfs, about which so many queer things are related by the court chroniclers of the period. The wine is said to have attracted connoisseurs from all parts.—A farmer in the neighborhood of Tavistock was as lucky in another way. In repairing an old mahogany secrétaire, knocked down to him at an auction, he discovered a secret drawer containing forty sovereigns, a gold enamelled ring, and a lot of securities for money, one of which was a certificate for over five hundred pounds Three per Cent. Consols. An old scrap of paper dated 1700 led to the belief that forty guineas had originally been placed there, but had been taken out in modern times and replaced by the sovereigns.—A Hastings abbot was even more lucky than the Tavistock farmer, all owing to an accident that befell a lady's pet dog. He treated the animal so successfully, that when the grateful owner died, which happened not long afterwards, she left the lucky chemist a good many thousand pounds; which enabled him to change the cares of business for the pleasures of retirement.

Lost money has often been regained by the accidental detection of the thief. A French he was not long since frequently missed some of her jewels in a most unaccountable manner. One day her servant fell down stairs and was severely hurt. On seeing the good Samaritan and pouring oil into her wounds, the mistress was astonished to find all her lost jewels in the pocket of her maid, who it

seems had all the time been the culprit.—How much oftener accidents contribute to the loss of money, scarcely needs comment; but the manner in which a gentleman lost all his winnings at play is worth repetition, as an instance of the fickleness of fate. He had won nine hundred pounds at the 'green table' at Monaco, and was only waiting for his landress to bring his dozen shirts home before he should quit the place. The landress, however, did not turn up at the appointed time, and to while away the hours he went into the Casino. Of course he played—and not only lost all he had already won, but twelve hundred pounds besides; which made him heartily wish he had left the shirts behind, that cost him one hundred pounds apiece for the washing.

Amongst those who have been most remarkably affected by accidental surprises are the deaf and dumb; and tales of unknown antiquity relate how speech or learning has been recovered or improved in this way. As a case in point. About 1750 a merchant of Cleves named Jorissen, who had become almost totally deaf, sitting one day near a harpsichord while some one was playing, and having a tobacco-pipe in his mouth, the bowl of which rested accidentally against the body of the instrument, was agreeably surprised to hear all the notes in the most distinct manner. This accident was a happy one, for Jorissen soon learned, by means of a piece of hard wood placed against his teeth, the other end of which was placed against the speaker's teeth, not only to keep up a conversation, but to understand the least whisper.—Other cures have been brought about less by skill than accidental circumstances. There is a story of a Frenchman who through a sword-wound received in a duel, suffered from internal abscesses, which forced him to walk in a stooping posture. Some time after, becoming engaged in another affair of honour, this time with pistols, the bullet of his adversary chanced to pass exactly through the abscesses caused by the former wound, which making them discharge, not only relieved him from the stoop, but caused him to walk with rather a stiff carriage ever afterwards.

Not only have some of the ills to which human flesh is heir been cured by accident, but life itself has been preserved from destruction by the same means. Lives are often lost by accident, it is true; but how they have also been saved by the chance detention of passengers from travelling in ships or trains that have afterward become wrecked, is well known. The writer can testify to the escape of a sailor from what is called a watery grave, owing to Jack happening to be tipsy, and incapable of taking his place in a boat putting off to a wreck on the Isle of Man coast, when invited by his companions to take an oar. The boat put off without him, and its crew were all drowned.—When a crowd collected on the banks of the St-Martin Canal in France not long since, it was a lucky thing that a man who lived near was urged by his wife to go and see what was the matter. Upon arriving on the scene of action, he learned that a child had fallen into the water and disappeared. Being an expert swimmer, he rescued alive his own son, a lad aged eight, who in playing had slipped over the bank.

Granted, that success in this life mainly depends

upon steadiness and honesty of purpose on the part of all who would secure it, still the foregoing examples shew how curiously little things have sometimes to do with great results.

NOTES FROM NEW MEXICO.

For many years the United States' government have been zealously endeavouring to collect materials for a series of topographical maps of their territories, a task which necessitated much work of a highly scientific nature. Other matters, however, have not been neglected by the surveyors; and so far as possible, without interference with their main object, they have always made careful investigations respecting the resources of the country in wood, water, and agricultural productions; the influence of climate, the character of vegetation, the location and extent of precious and economic minerals, the routes of communication for rail and common roads; the character, habits, and disposition toward settlers of the several Indian tribes; the water-supply available for irrigation; the season of rain and snow-fall; the condition of mining and other industries, &c.

During the season of 1877, a small but well-organised and equipped expedition was despatched to examine a comparatively unknown section of New Mexico; and Mr T. W. Goad, the meteorologist of the party, recently communicated to the Royal Geographical Society an account of their explorations, which contains some features of general interest.

In the course of their investigations between the Sierra Blanca and Oscura mountains, they met with a lava-flow more than seventy-five miles long and about three miles broad. This *Mal Pais*, as the Mexicans call it, resembles a black river, widening and narrowing as the country undulates; it is somewhat higher than the surrounding country, and is full of caverns; the region, in fact, somewhat resembles the lava-beds of Oregon, where the Modocs for a long time so successfully resisted the United States' troops.

Several of the caverns were visited by the party; but the only one of importance was near Fort Stanton. This cave, like the others, was in a limestone formation, and proved of considerable length. Some persons at Fort Stanton asserted that no one had been to the end, although a distance of five miles was measured. The exploration was of a most uncomfortable nature, necessitating long crawls through narrow passages, and obliging the explorers to wade up to their waists in ice-cold water for hours. Stalactites and stalagmites of immense size reflected the faint light of the tallow-candles carried by the explorers; while sometimes they would come upon domes cathedral-like in their lofty grandeur. The lake in this cave was said to contain eyeless fish, but none of the party was able to catch or see any. A thorough search was made for an exit beyond, and holes hardly large enough for the

body to pass were crawled through; but no success attended the efforts of the explorers.

Numerous Pueblo and Spanish ruins were also visited, of which the largest was Gran Quivira. It is supposed that in the year 1550 Cortez in crossing the continent left some of his followers located in this spot, and that these men, taking advantage of the superstitions of the Montezuma Indians, compelled them to build a city under their supervision. Eventually the Indians rebelled, killed their oppressors, and destroyed everything. Tradition says that treasure lies buried in the ruins. The walls of the principal church are still standing, and present some interesting appearances. On the east of the church is the town, the main building of which contained eight or nine hundred rooms. Now no water is near, though drains and dried-up springs indicate there having been formerly a plentiful supply. The Indians told the surveying party that a river flowed underneath the church, but no trace of it was to be seen.

Some of Mr Goad's remarks respecting the Indians of this region possess peculiar interest. Apaches, Navajoes, and Utes are the nomadic tribes there met with; and to the east may be found the Arapahoes, Comanches, &c. The Mesquero Apaches are without doubt of the worst class: laziness, theft, and every other crime, can be attributed to them. Small of stature and thin, they present a miserable appearance. Their feats on horseback are wonderful, and could not be excelled in any country. Their eyes are deep-set, and have an expression of fiendish malice uncomfortable to encounter. With red and yellow paint bedaubed on their faces, they come into the Agency with wild gesticulations, whooping and yelling like maniacs. A government agent is deputed to supply them with blankets, cooking utensils, beef, and many other things, which, to Mr Goad's own personal knowledge, are wasted. It is not easy to account for the want of thrift of these red men. Their Reservation abounds with game, bear, deer, wild-turkey, &c. The land is also rich for agricultural purposes; so their continued depredations in Texas and elsewhere seem hardly to admit of excuse. During their stay in this region the survey party, however, was not molested, and never lost an animal.

The Navajoes are a far superior race, and as Lieutenant Morrison, the leader of the expedition says, there is probably no Indian in the plains as intelligent. Of straight lithe figures, square shoulders, average height, quick in their movements, with bright intelligent faces, they are easily distinguished when mingling with other Indians; while still having the characteristics of the nomadic tribes, they are better able to support themselves. Even now they raise corn and bread, and have very large herds of sheep and horses, besides four-horned sheep.

The squaw's process of making blankets is a very tedious affair. Between two upright poles are three horizontal, two of these placed apart, a little more than the length of the blanket, which runs vertically from one to the other; the warp threads are stretched; then those of the woof are

put in one at a time by hand; a narrow thin board is put in after each of them, and they are hammered down by striking the board with a club, which they handle so skillfully as to rarely break a thread. Some of the yarn is furnished by the government; but the best white yarn they make from the wool of their sheep, and the finest red by picking English cloth and spinning the yarn. These blankets are delightfully warm, and are a perfect protection against rain.

The Utes are comparatively industrious, for they seek a livelihood by hunting the buffalo, tanning the hides skillfully and ornamentally, and bartering them with the whites.

The cañon of the Rio Grande, below Costilla, Mr Goad considers peculiarly interesting, because it differs in most respects from other cañons; that is, instead of being worn away by the action of water alone, it was probably commenced by volcanic action. Though it is very narrow, its depth is about one thousand feet. The river at this point has a great fall, and rushes along with a velocity of ten miles an hour. Down this awful abyss Mr Goad had to find his way to the water's edge, in order that certain observations might be properly taken. Though he modestly says nothing of his exploit, it is satisfactory to know that he escaped without accident.

Owing to the high elevation of the country above the sea-level, the climate is delightful, for at no season is one deprived of sleep by excessive heat, nor does the dry cold affect the body. In summer, during the day, the heat may be very great; but as soon as the sun sets, a delightful cool breeze springs up and at once soothes the over-heated blood. Consumption is unknown among the people of New Mexico; and if the Mexicans were a little more cleanly, their baneful—the small-pox—might disappear. Small-pox in New Mexico is not of that virulent description known in Europe; but nevertheless, Mexican and Indian children die by the hundred from want of common precaution. It is a strange thing that if an animal die on the road and is not devoured by coyotes or wolves, the flesh will become dry, and not decompose in the usual manner. This may be attributable to the dryness of the air, which absorbs all moisture. The atmosphere being so clear, objects at great distances appear close at hand, and one unaccustomed to this phenomenon would frequently be led to undertake journeys of five times the supposed distance—a fact which, added to many remarkable mirages, rendered great care necessary on the part of the expedition in the conduct of their explorations.

MORE ABOUT BEAVERS.

FROM a gentleman in the state of Mississippi, United States, we have received the following communication regarding those interesting creatures the beavers. He writes as follows:

'I have seen with interest in one of your late numbers (February 9) some account of the successful attempt by Lord Bute to acclimatise beavers in Great Britain; and think that some peculiarities I have noticed in the habits of that animal from my extreme southern point of view (latitude thirty-one degrees), may be worth relating, especially as shewing that the re-introduction of the

beaver into your island need not of necessity be a work of so much care and expense, or require so many precautions as seem to have attended Lord Bute's experiment. A few words as to locality.

'Less than one hundred miles north of New Orleans, when the line of the Northern Railroad has passed the low-lying plains and rank swamps of Lower Louisiana, it enters into a rolling or gently undulating country, elevated two or three hundred feet above the sea-level, of but second-rate fertility, and sparsely inhabited, but watered by countless little streams of clear cool water, flowing over gravelly beds, wherein it appears the beavers greatly rejoice.

'The Orleansans and inhabitants of the rich low banks of the Mississippi River also esteem it highly as a place of summer retreat; glad to exchange the miasma of the swamps and marshes, and the almost tropical heat of the sugar-cane fields, for the breezy hills and balsamic fragrance of the long-leaved pine. Here, some ten years ago, I pitched my summer tent on a well-wooded hill overlooking the Tangipokos, a little river of bright sparkling water, into which flows, through my place, one of the many spring-fed rivulets of the country; and ever since, as soon as the orange flowers in the streets of New Orleans indicate that winter is fairly over, there arises a great outcry among the little ones to get back to their country home.

'All through this country I found, rather to my surprise, that beavers are quite common; seldom seen, as they are shy and nocturnal in their habits. Their dams are found on the little streams. We frequently come across the slides they make either for amusement or exercise, leading from the top of the bank down to the water's edge. Occasionally we see them on moonlit summer nights swimming in the deep pools of the river, or hear the loud slaps of their tails. From time to time, beaver meat and tails have been brought to us for sale; and if we happen to have city friends staying with us, we present it to them as a course of game. It is quite eatable; but after an experiment or two, I find that my own family don't "hanker" after it.

'On the "Spring Branch" within sight and gunshot of my dining-room windows they have built two dams such as you describe, of sticks, mud, and moss. They have their nests or dwellings in the banks, with no exterior indication of their place; the object of the pond their dam creates being to entirely cover the entrances, of which I think they have several to each nest.

'They build no houses such as are described in all accounts I have read, in the middle of their ponds like a hay-cock, or as you say, like an enlarged wren's nest turned over; nor can I hear of any ever being found in my neighbourhood. Whether the mild climate, where the streams never freeze, has changed their habits, or that my beavers are less advanced in civilisation than their more northern brethren, I leave for more learned observers than I am to determine, but certain it is that they here have left off their most interesting trait.

'The dams are very well built. We had this spring a tremendous deluge of rain, and a dam

of my own on the little stream I have mentioned, the construction of which had been the principal occupation of my last summer's vacation, was entirely carried away.

'The other day, after a survey of the ruins, I walked down to my beaver dams to see how they had fared, and found them intact—a patch of fresh mud and moss, smoothed and flattened by a beaver's tail, being the only sign of any repairs having been wanted since the flood. They don't seem to touch any of the large trees, magnolia, beech, or oak—two to four feet in diameter—but confine themselves to the undergrowth, mostly under three inches through. They don't cut a "wedge-shaped gap," but gnaw all round, so as to leave the stump a perfect cone. Their favourite wood is what the country people here call "beaver-wood" (I think it is a *Deutzia*, bearing white flowers not unlike orange-blossoms). About their ponds we can find quantities of truncheons two or three feet long, with both ends rounded as if by a lathe.

'I don't think they live in large communities; probably not more than one or two families to a pond. My own colony was thinned off by the trapping of six or eight by an intelligent contraband, whom I left in charge one winter. He shewed me the skins with great pride when we again returned, and had saved an old female beaver, who had been caught by the foot, as a pet for the children. But after some months' fruitless attempts to gain any further recognition than snaps and snarls, we opened the door, and bade her go home. The trap has since been confined to its legitimate vocation of catching minks and 'coons.

'The point of my communication is, that it ought not to be difficult or expensive to start a colony of beavers anywhere in a country where there are running streams and the proper undergrowth to supply them with food, since they live and thrive without any care within a stone's-throw of even a railway station with all its adjuncts. Perhaps a stronger case occurs a couple of miles below me, where the railway crosses some wet springy ground where there used to be several dams. The line of embankment supplied the place of these dams, and the beavers taking the good the gods provided, worked no more on their own dams, but enjoyed the pond of from four or five acres the embankment had made for them. A year or two since, the railway hands undertook to put a culvert through the embankment and drain the pond, which, after running freely for a few days and nearly emptying the pond, suddenly stopped one night; and on being examined was found to have been stopped up by the beavers. It was opened, and again closed. This went on for some time. As the hands passed along they would open the end, and at night the beavers would shut it up; till finding that closing at the end where their work could so easily be broken down did no good, the beavers moved their dam to the middle of the culvert, which was some forty feet long, out of the reach of the poles used to poke it down; and there it is, I believe, to the present day—at least last time I passed, the water was at its usual level. All of which proves that beavers will work with express trains thundering over their heads in a manner their ancestors never contemplated, any more than our own.'

BRITISH GUIANA.

The writer of the article on 'British Guiana,' published in No. 476 of *Chambers's Journal*, requests us to state that the strictures upon the conduct of the planters of that colony in reference to the employment of coolie labour, contained in the article, are not inspired by anything in the work of which it is a review, but founded upon general reading on the coolie question. Mr Barrington Brown, the author of the work reviewed—*Canoe and Camp Life in British Guiana*—has requested the author of the article to state that 'During a six years' sojourn in Guiana, he, Mr Barrington Brown, never met with a single case, or even heard of one, where a planter had kidnapped a coolie, or acted the part of a tyrant to one.' The author of the article makes this statement public with great pleasure; but while doing so, desires to point out that those who benefit by the coolie system cannot be held guiltless of the abuses of it by the agents employed in carrying it out; even though they be absolved of personal abetment of those abuses.

A BACHELOR'S APOLOGY.

HER eyes were bright; her figure slight,
And light as any fairy;
Her nose was heavenward inclined;
Her manners sweet and airy.

Her mouth was like a rosebud;
Her voice like any linnet;
Her head was little, and I fear
Had very little in it.

But then so artless was her art,
My heart could not resist her;
And added to her other charms,
She had a pretty sister.

They bloomed like any double rose,
They blushed a double pink;
One graced the name of Laura;
The other, Kate, I think.

When left alone with Laura,
Love urged his soft dictate;
And in sweet Laura's absence,
I doted more—on Kate.

And thus to choose between them
'Twere treason to decide,
Because I had been happiest
With either for my bride.

To filch one flower, and leave her
Companion all alone,
To pine in single sadness
Would need a heart of stone.

And that's the reason, Ladies,
I'm still your partisan,
For being single-hearted,
I rest a single man.

T. P.

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TAINÉ'S WARNING.

WE desire to introduce our readers to the knowledge of a remarkable French writer, Hippolyte Adolphe Taine, whose works are beginning to attract attention. We speak of him as being remarkable, because, unlike most French authors, he writes to the apprehension of English minds. There is nothing jerky or ranting about his style. We never fail to understand his meaning, which we cannot say of Victor Hugo and many others. Perhaps this phenomenon of intelligibility is partly due to the fact that M. Taine is well acquainted with the English language and literature, about which he has written with vigour and accuracy. He is not an old man; for he was born so lately as 1828, and in his own country enjoyed the benefits of a university education. The turn of his mind appears to be toward critical analysis. He sifts to the bottom all he takes in hand. We cannot call him an historian; but he will spend months and years in examining old documents, and picking out the facts on which historians may form their narratives. The laborious perseverance with which he pursues these studies gives one an extraordinary idea of his patient and intelligent industry.

The latest of Taine's productions has engaged the earnest consideration of Frenchmen, as bearing on subjects of momentous interest, and reflectively may prove of service in our own country. The title of the book is *Les Origines de la France Contemporaine*, which might be construed to signify 'the origin of the present condition of things in France.' It is a terrible ripping up of the idiotic way in which the French monarchy was upset and followed by endless and abortive attempts to establish a government at once settled and favourable to public liberty. From it we are enabled clearly to understand how France has brought itself into that strangely exceptional condition, out of which successive generations of schemers are seemingly unable to drag it; so that after nearly a hundred years, with several intermediate revolutions and *coups d'état*, a very

gallant and estimable people are still at the mercy of circumstances—a queer outcome, not without a salutary lesson all over the world.

It has always appeared to us that the turning-point towards ruin in France was about 1841, when Francis I. commenced his infamous crusades against the Waldenses. Up till this time England and France were nearly on a par as concerns social organisation. Now they parted company. England abolished the monastic establishments, set up a modified religious system, and commenced something like regular parliamentary legislation. France on the contrary began the ignoble work of religious persecution, and the perfecting of political despotism. Successive French kings, drawing after them nobility and clergy into a vortex of wasteful though polite dissipation, gave a twist to the social fabric from which it never recovered. M. Taine dwells at great length on the frivolous habits of the court. Affecting almost the character of a deity, the king knew nothing of practical government. He was an ignorant and highly decorous puppet, and government was carried on by ministers accountable to nobody. The great point was to draw money from an inordinate taxation that reached the humblest individual, and which was expended in monstrous extravagance. The principal, if not the only occupation of the king was hunting. Great tracts of fertile country were laid waste for his amusement. Louis XVI. has been usually considered a well-behaved king, but he did little else than slaughter wild animals. Taine tells us to a nicety the extent of his butcheries, for the record of them is preserved. Sometimes he killed upwards of four hundred head of game in a day. In 1780 he brought down 20,534 head; in 1781, 20,991 head. In fourteen years he destroyed 189,351 head, besides 1254 stags, with boars and bucks proportionate—all by his own hand. Even when affairs were in the most critical state, the king went out hunting. In short, the mania for slaughtering wild animals, which were bred and preserved for his diversion, set aside all considerations of state policy. According to Taine, battue-shooting, as it is now called, had not

a little to do with bringing on the Revolution, for besides withdrawing attention from matters of solid concern, it involved the appropriation of vast domains for the rearing of creatures doomed to destruction by way of pastime. The brutality of this species of pastime need not be dwelt on. The wickedness consisted in depriving the people of food, in order that game might not be encroached upon except by the king and privileged orders.

The accounts given by Taine of the condition of the peasantry in the eighteenth century when oppression had reached its climax, are appalling. In the most fertile regions there were misery and privation. Black bread steeped in water, and even that to a limited extent, was the principal food. In some places the people were reduced to eating grass and weeds, though to touch the weeds was reckoned penal, as they were sacred to the feeding of game. A case is told of a poor woman with two children in swaddling-clothes whose whole reliance was on the milk of two goats. The goats ate the weeds, and that being a crime, the goats were killed by authority. The extortions in the shape of taxes to which the humbler classes were subject are almost incredible. On the most wretched cottage a house-tax was levied. To escape this exaction, some tried to live in caves and holes in the earth. The subterfuge was unavailing. They had to pay a poll-tax of five francs a year, from which it was impossible to escape. A tax was levied on salt. Some endeavoured to do with the smallest possible quantity of the article; but the tax-collectors visiting every dwelling estimated what each family ought to consume per annum, and on that they were taxed. People living at the sea-side occasionally found a little salt dried on the rocks. If they dared to appropriate it, they were guilty of cheating the revenue, and were subject to a severe punishment; the handful of salt so secured being in the meanwhile destroyed, as a warning to all persons who audaciously picked up so much as a particle of salt on the sea-shore.

The nobility, seigneurs, and other great men, being drawn off to Paris, where it was indispensable they should shew themselves, the peasantry and other rural occupants generally had no friend to whom they could look but the curé or parish priest. The curés, however, could do little for them; for besides having no sort of political influence, they for the most part had only the barest means of subsistence. Although practically doing nearly all the clerical work in the country, they were thought to be well paid with a stipend equal to twelve or fifteen pounds a year; while the higher clergy enjoyed large revenues, which they did nothing for, and possessed the additional privilege of being exempt from taxation. These disorders in the ecclesiastical system were another cause of revolutionary violence. M. Taine presents a number of amusing details of the expenditure of the royal household, in which some thousands of hangers-on, high and low, were concerned. The waste of food at the various tables in the household was something awful. 'The street at Versailles is still shewn, formerly lined with stalls, to which the king's valets resorted to nourish Versailles by the sale of his dessert.'

One naturally wonders how such abuses should have been tolerated; but any comment upon

them would have been followed by summary vengeance. At the very least, any one finding fault would have been scorned as a bourgeois, and lost caste. No doubt, the humbler and middle classes had their grumble in an underhand way. Politically, these classes were reckoned little better than the lower animals. A tradesman, no matter what was his wealth, was contemptuously called a *roturier*, a term equivalent to a clodpoll. Attorneys and notaries were relegated to the ranks of the *roturiers*. No nobleman driving through the streets of Paris felt he did wrong in causing the wheels of his carriage to splash with mud any ordinary passenger. *Roturiers* might be thankful they were not ridden over. In all this there was accumulating a degree of hatred and discontent fated to burst out like torrents of fire from a volcano.

How the volcano did burst out is exceedingly curious. Though destined to burst out some way or other, no one could have prognosticated that the flame was to be kindled as a matter of a jesting among people of rank. Taine describes the usual conversation at the court and in the salons as having long been a kind of drivelling nonsense interspersed with witticisms. There prevailed no knowledge of public nor of local affairs. Life was viewed as a high-dress opera. All acted a part. Talk of the actual condition of things would have been deemed degrading, absurd. The conversation flowed in abstractions and mirthful sallies. By-and-by there arose charming observations on the rights of man; and this style of talk, promoted by the philosophers who figured in good society, became a passion. What strikes us now as very strange was the inconsiderateness of haranguing in drawing-rooms on subjects of this nature, for society as it actually existed was a denial of the rights which it became the fashion to extol. It was like playing with firebrands. Yet, the truth, as learned from Taine and historians generally, is that the fashionable declaimers never seemed to give a thought as to their fine-spun theories being taken up in earnest.

This kind of prattle about the rights of man would in time have passed away like other fashionable diversions, but for the fact that the philosophic theories got into print, and were eagerly caught up by students of the various colleges, who began to deliver public harangues interspersed with scraps of Latin on the glorious old republics of Rome and Sparta. *Roturiers* of every description speedily embraced the new doctrines, that were so energetically diffused. The lower classes could not read, or had no inclination to do so; that happened to be of little consequence, for the harangues of the orators made them aware how they had all along been cheated of their rights. The leading apostle of the new doctrine was Jean Jacques Rousseau, son of a watch-maker in Geneva. After roving about in a half-mad kind of way, Rousseau settled in Paris. Some of his writings were morally objectionable; but none of them did any serious harm politically except his *Contrat Social*. This work, characteristically wild in sentiment, purported that in nature there is a social contract which ought to regulate the rights of human beings one towards another. Without using any jargon about an alleged contract, we all acknowledge that in every well-regulated community there are rights to be

mutually respected. The civil law enforces these rights. Rousseau in his crazy dreamings went far beyond this reasonable view of the matter. His *Contrat Social* laid down the principle, that irrespective of mental diversities and casual circumstances, all men are equal; starting from which theory came the delicious cry of 'liberty, equality, and fraternity.' Rousseau died in 1778. His tomb, which may be seen in the Pantheon at Paris, consists of a vault with a door partially open, out of which is stretched the figure of a hand holding a blazing torch, as an emblem of his having set fire to the world. His writings certainly were the torch which fired the French revolutionary volcano. In eleven years from his decease, the appalling effects of his doctrines were visible. The oppressions of the privileged orders, the denial of justice, the crucial taxation, the religious intolerance, the frightful condition of the country, furnished materials for the conflagration. How the mob were incited to lay the monarchy in ruin, how the king and queen perished on the scaffold, how the nobility whom they had pauperised left them in their distress, and fled abroad like flocks of scared pigeons, are facts with which every one is familiar.

The French Revolution was not the mere overthrow of a dynasty. In the madness of the moment, every institution was laid low. It was a clean sweep. Under the inspirations of 'liberty, equality, and fraternity,' the nation had to begin over again, according to the fancies of men who never possessed any experience in government. There was no want of audacity in trying to put things to rights. Men who could just sign their names, and had barely shoes to their feet, took the upper hand, or were obsequiously consulted. Fanatical clubs domineered over the earliest appointed legislative bodies. From the notion of putting all on an equal footing, the right of primogeniture was abolished, and the rule of equal division of property among children was established. Of all the laws enacted during this wild saturnalia, this one has wrought the most lasting mischief; for through successive divisions and subdivisions of property, it has created a poor peasant proprietary, unfitted to take any intelligent part in public business, and who are usually a facile herd in the hands of a designing central authority. It has further had the malignant effect of keeping down the number of children in families, whereby the population of France is suffering a gradual diminution. The Legislative Assembly, as it was called, which met in October 1792, was composed of individuals generally inferior in knowledge or social status. Among the whole, there were not fifty members with means of livelihood above two pounds a week, which does not surprise us, for the constituencies were for the most part devoid of education, and easily imposed on by pretenders of no administrative capacity.

The moral to be drawn from the outcome of the French Revolution will survive throughout all time. It is, that, from a whim in abstract politics, a country may recklessly bring on itself the most terrible disasters. From what has been stated, the convulsion in France was in the first place due to a gross system of mismanagement, and in fact a breakdown was inevitable. The thing to be deplored was the attempt to remodel the government on nothing more substantial than a chimera—a very

pretty chimera, no doubt, but only a toy, and not qualified to encounter the hard realities of everyday life. Abstractly, men may be equal. Each has a head, two legs, two arms, and other physical attributes of humanity. But you cannot say that the man who is ignorant, thriftless, devoid of self-respect, and who, meanly clothed, stashed lounging in the streets with his hands in his pockets waiting with the hope of being treated to a dram—and of which class we see hundreds daily—is in social aspects equal to a man who is intelligent, diligent in his calling, and who by a course of thrift has realised a decent maintenance for himself and family. The two cannot be compared, and could not be spoken of as equal unless by a perversion of terms. Camille Desmoulins and other heedless enthusiasts who declaimed on the tops of tables in the Palais-Royal on the rights of man, failed to recognise the distinction between man as a mere-uninstructed animal, and man as an intelligent being alive to his duties and responsibilities. The Parisian orators, in their insane philanthropy, did all in their power to flatter the most ignorant and depraved of the population, and to puff them up with such exalted notions of their dignity and importance, as led them to assume an intolerable superiority, and commit the most fearful excesses. It was a sad mistake; and do we not see this mistake, though in modified conditions, perpetrated in a very inconsiderate manner until the present day?

The typical French voter immediately after the Revolution, was an unlettered being; and his successor in the rural districts, whose only wish is to drudge, to live parsimoniously, and to be let alone, remains in the same category. So do the waiifs, the roughs, or whatever they may be called, who embarrass the large towns. Thoughtful Frenchmen of the present day, like M. Taine, quite understand how the more intelligent and the propertyed classes may be swamped by the ignorant and semi-pauperised. They are not inclined to think that representative institutions are in themselves a guarantee for sound legislation; because they have seen with what fatal effect the worst passions and prejudices among the uneducated masses set upon representatives in bringing about changes which intelligent and untrammelled individuals would repudiate. The French, who have paid so dearly for chimeras, may perhaps be under a morbid sensibility on this score, but we cannot withhold from them our sympathy. It is clear that every kind of representative government that has been set up in France, has fallen by the clamour of mobs. The clamour of a Parisian mob, incited by a skillfully propagated falsehood, hurried France into war in July 1870; and in three months afterwards the same mob wrecked the whole machinery of government in the course of a Sunday afternoon. Whether mobs act directly, or by representatives who, through weakness or selfishness, meanly curry their favour, the end is the same. It seems to matter little whether outrageous proceedings are counselled by a mob in the parks and streets or by assemblages of their appointment under a roof.

The WARNING we gather from Taine is, that no representative system is safe which rests mainly on a poor and illiterate constituency. France feels the full force of this warning, which comes too late. It is, however, not too late for other countries

whose institutions have not yet been dissolved by the whims of philanthropists, charlatans, and politicians, who act either under strangely inconsiderate notions of duty, or are not disinclined to jeopardise national existence in order to promote the temporary interests of party. Far be it from us to assume a function irreconcilable with the well-known character of these pages, but it is hardly out of place for us to recommend calm consideration in every matter of serious national concern, and in particular to draw attention to the terrible lessons taught by contemporary history.

W. C.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—ANOTHER SORT OF CAPTAIN.

BAFFLED, by Richard Hold's singular change of purpose, in his hopes of procuring information from him, Lord Harrogate next turned his attention to the discovery of that officer in the Guards bearing the aristocratic name of Standish, on the back of whose card the words 'Wilkins' and 'ney' were still visible in faded ink. It is not very difficult at the Horse Guards, the War Office, or the Army Agents', to glean some particulars as to the present status of an old officer formerly in the Household Brigade; but Major Raffington, who was fortunately found in the bay-window of the Pterodactyle Club, in Pall Mall, saved Lord Harrogate the trouble of a reference to these grave authorities.

'I've known so many, you see, of the name,' said the major, telling off his quondam acquaintances on the buttons of his waistcoat. 'There was Beauty Standish, very vain dog, but remarkably handsome fellow—he died in *Attila's* year—so long ago as that!' (Major Raffington did not presumably allude to the Hunnish conqueror, but to a by-gone winner of the Derby.) 'Then there was Hide-and-seek Standish, as we called him, who was head and ears in debt, and spent his energies in dodging the bailiffs. And there was Charley, who exchanged into the Line, and died of cholera at Lahore. And—I've purposely kept him till the last!—your man must be old "Trump" Standish, as they nicknamed him, on account of his proclivities for whist. Retired these fifteen years, and no chicken then. Yes, the old boy is alive and in London; chambers at the Albany. He and I are about the only two sensible men in town, for we know when we are well off, and never follow the herd in rushing out of it. Not a member here, old Captain Standish. Belongs to my club, the Walpole, though, and nets his ten or fifteen guineas a night at whist after dinner in the season as well as ever he did. I happen to know he's in London, for we dined alone together yesterday at the Walpole; and I made the *chef* give us a more *soigné* bit of dinner than you would think possible at this dead time of year. Not half a bad fellow, old Standish!'

'Captain Standish will be with your lordship in a minute—he has not quite finished dressing—if your lordship will please to wait,' the captain's man had said, as he pushed forward an easy-chair, and deferentially smoothed out the morning papers on the table, and then leaving the visitor in the little drawing-room, hurried away through the

curtained doors to lend assistance in the tedious process of his master's toilet.

Lord Harrogate, as he looked around him, felt as though he were in a species of social museum, so many of the objects which he beheld were suggestive of recollections of the past. On the walls hung the portraits of dead and gone beauties, toasts of other days. The yellow letter, displayed upon yonder table with a sort of ostentatious carelessness, and beginning 'Dear Standish,' was signed by a Royal Highness whose mortal remains had long reposed in crimson-velvet coffin, gold-adorned, under tons of marble. The very perfumes of musk and ambergris that clung to the portfolios and caskets and Books of Beauty and china-bowls artistically disposed on stand and console, were like ghostly scents from some Elysium of an obsolete fashion.

The appearance of the master of these treasures, when at length he presented himself, with affable bow and smile nicely graduated to display as much as was prudent of his dazzling front-teeth, was perfectly in accordance with the objects around.

'I make no apology, my lord, for receiving you thus,' said the ex-Guardsman, speaking with that measured self-conscious urbanity of tone and bearing which but a few survivors of a courtier generation yet affect. 'There is a time for dressing-gown and slippers, as there is for coat and boots, and I know that I can trust to your kindness to excuse mine.'

Captain Standish's dressing-gown and Captain Standish's slippers, on their own merits needed neither excuse nor apology, if once the principle of such elaborate undress could be conceded. The captain belonged to an era when splendid robes of this kind were habitually worn by men of fashion, and when a dandy received visits draped in brocade or velvet gorgeous with embroidery of floss-silk or gold or silver. He knew better at his time of life, and in the second half of the nineteenth century, than to glimmer in quasi-theatrical magnificence. But the dressing-gown which he wore, a mere pattern of palms on a mouse-gray ground, was such as a king could not buy, now that the remnant of the Cashmere shawl-weavers have ceased to treat the matchless Himalayan wool as once they did; and the purple-velvet slippers, heavy with gold thread from the cunning needles of Stamboul, were worthy of the dressing-gown.

The wearer of these handsome vestments was a well-preserved, fresh-looking, elderly dandy, with small blue eyes, that were quick to note the pips on each card as it dropped from the hand of the player; a wig that contained a slight but judicious sprinkling of gray; and a firm mouth and chin. His necktie, of the palest buff, was arranged with a neatness unattainable by the careless gilded youth of to-day; and his waistcoat, of a somewhat deeper shade, owed its perfect fit and increased smoothness to the combined efforts of tailor, laundress, and valet.

'Had the honour of knowing your father. Knew him as Lord Marlow, in your grandfather's time. The Harrogate title wasn't in your branch then. That is why I ventured on the liberty of offering you my hand.'

In saying this, Captain Standish was within the mark. It was not his whole hand, but three of

its blanching and bejewelled fingers that he had extended to Lord Harrogate. To a young man, the famous whistle-pleader seldom held out more than two. In the days and in the society when and where the captain had learned his code of ethics, hand-shaking was a ceremony to be nicely regulated, not lavished, as at present, wholesale.

'It was on the subject of that very title—of the unfortunate event which brought it into our immediate family,' said Lord Harrogate, 'that I wished to speak with you, Captain Standish.'

'Ah, indeed!' returned the Guardsman coolly. 'Very delighted, of course, if I can be of service in any way, but at the present moment believe me, I cannot see how. Sad story! I remember as if it were yesterday the Drawing-room at St James's, when Clare, Lady Harrogate, went to court as Lady Harrogate. As Miss Clare De Vere she had been presented, of course; and I remember how lovely she looked at the great ball at Dorsetshire House. Then she married Ned De Vere—he owed me thirty pounds, poor fellow, the rag-end of an unsettled account at cards, when he broke his neck—and the child was drowned, and—'

But bless me! my Lord Harrogate, what can I do to right matters at this time of day?

Lord Harrogate produced, not the moiety of the torn card, from which Inspector Drew, who clung to it with fanatical tenacity, as the one undeniable piece of circumstantial evidence available in the case, was reluctant to be separated, but a fac-simile, due to the patient skill of a photographer, at the same time explaining where and how the original had been found.

'I haven't a doubt of its being my card,' said the captain unhesitatingly. 'I have stuck to the model until to-day. See!' he added, as he opened a card-case in embossed silver, and shook out a half-dozen of pasteboard parallelograms; 'the only change I have seen fit to make is in putting "late Grenadier Guards".' As to how the card got to the towing-path, that, said Captain Standish meditatively, 'is quite another sort of thing. Perhaps a dun dropped it. My tailor, I know, was fond of gudgeon-fishing, and once boasted to me of his skill in spinning a minnow. I'm not an angler myself.'

The written words 'Wilkins' and 'ney' at first suggested nothing to the Guardsman's usually retentive memory. 'The only fellow of the name that I remember,' he said, stroking his smooth-shaven chin, 'was a stage-coachman, Nat Wilkins, who toiled the Cambridge *Telegraph* after Dick Vaughan, that we called Neck-or-night, died. "Ney" too is a puzzle to me. Courteney is a name that ends so, to be sure. So does Warney. I knew Lord Warney, the present Duke, you know, remarkably well. But he was not a Cambridge trut, and had nothing to do with Nat Wilkins.'

Lord Harrogate, somewhat unwillingly, mentioned the name of Sir Sykes Denzil.

'Oh, ah, to be sure,' replied the captain, elevating his eyebrows a very little; 'man that came in by chance for all old Harrogate had to leave. Yes, I knew Sykes Denzil—knew him too when he was so pushed, about the time that old Sir Harbottle went to his rest, that he looked twice at a shilling before he called a hackney or tipped a waiter. And now I think of it,' added the ex-Guardsman with a half-reproachful tap on

his square forehead, 'I am reminded somehow of another Wilkins, a lawyer in the City. I've had no dealings with the fellow ever since I sent in my papers and left the army; but he was a useful sort of fellow to gentlemen in difficulties.'

Lord Harrogate drew a deep breath. He stood astonished at his own dullness in not having identified ere this the owner of the name of Wilkins with that pushing London solicitor who was now law-agent of the Carbery property, and whose influence over Sir Sykes was the subject of much local wonder. As for the 'ney,' that might easily be the last syllable in the word 'attorney,' or it might be part of an address.

'I've a Law List somewhere,' said the captain, ringing the bell; and his well-trained servant promptly hunted out the red-backed volume, wherein figured Enoch Wilkins, of St Nicholas Poultry, in the City of London.

'There you have your "ney,"' said Captain Standish triumphantly; 'and I suppose I recommended the man to Denzil—young Denzil, as he then was—since the card is mine. But I don't in the least recollect having done so; and all the cross-examining counsel of the Central Criminal Court would fail, I fear, in refreshing my memory so far as to make me remember it. Yet I conclude I did so, since the card is mine.'

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—FOR VALUABLE CONSIDERATION.

'In short, Jasper, it must be done!' Sir Sykes groaned out the words rather than spoke them, and as he did so, sank back in his chair and hid his face and almost sobbed. There was something piteous in the oblation, on the part of a proud grave, man of that dignified decorum which had for years infolded him like a mantle of state, that might have touched the heart of even Jasper. And Jasper seeing his father's distress, and perceiving that it was genuine, was startled, if not sympathetic.

'I don't like to see you thus, sir,' he said with unusual gentleness, rising from the chair in which he had lounged till now. He moved a step or two forward, and then stood, as though dubious as to what consolation to offer.

There had never been much confidence between the baronet and his heir. In some respects they were perhaps too much alike, in others as wide apart as the poles; but there were no points of contact in the characters of the two men which could render the company of one congenial to the other. Still, blood is thicker than water, and Jasper could not view quite unmoved his father's evident misery.

'You mean, sir, I think, that I must marry Miss Willis—if she will have me, of course?' said Jasper slowly. 'It is a serious step to take. No backing out of it, when once the words "I will" have been pronounced. I did not see my way, you may remember, when we talked of this before.'

'You did not, as you phrase it, see your way,' returned Sir Sykes bitterly; 'in other words, you held out for high terms, and now I have no choice but to submit to them. It is the fashion of the day, it would appear, to drive a hard bargain, even when the bargainer is a son dealing with his own father.'

Now, this was not an entirely fair remark on the part of Sir Sykes, and Jasper could not but feel that this was so. The baronet had taken it upon himself to force a wife upon his son, and the latter was, according to all precedent, entitled to expect compensation for the matrimonial sacrifice urged upon him. That he himself was not a model son, the former cavalry officer was well aware; but he did feel that in this matter of the match with Miss Ruth Willis he was hardly used.

'I don't know about bargaining,' said Jasper.

Most men, and many women, have moral natures so oddly tempered that in them vanity takes the precedence of self-interest; and that it is all but impossible to abstain from resenting a reproach or rebutting an accusation, even if mute meekness would be the most immediately profitable policy. Philosophers, no doubt with the example of Socrates before their mental retina, can exercise due self-control; and servants—albeit they never heard of the Porch or of the white-robed group of eager disciples jostling round the sage, or of shrill-voiced Xantippe—learn practical philosophy, and can bear to be blamed for what they never did, perhaps reflecting on the many undiscovered peccadilloes that balance the account.

But Jasper, who had not had the advantage of a servant's training, could not help the exculpating of himself from the charge of 'bargaining' with his father, albeit, even as he spoke, he felt his languid pulses quicken at the idea of being promoted to the permanent position of heir-presumptive of Carbery Chase. The words which Sir Sykes had spoken must surely imply a design to yield in that matter of the entail; and as heir of entail, a new career and new possibilities would open before Jasper Denzil.

'I don't know about bargaining,' said Jasper, in an injured tone. Sir Sykes, however, did not take up the ball of contention, and there was silence for a little space. The baronet was the first to speak.

'Old Lord Harrogate's splendid bequest,' he said, in a low wearied voice, 'has brought with it little happiness. I smile now, when I recall the exultation, half incredulous, with which I first learned that I was master of Carbery and its great rent-roll—I, who had been used to consider money as the one thing needful. Poverty—the poverty of aristocratic beggars, such as were your grandfather and myself—is a stern schoolmaster. I believed in wealth, till I had it.'

Jasper felt a faint thrill of genuine sympathy as he hearkened to the sad, almost heart-broken tone in which his father spoke. He said nothing, however, and indeed scarcely knew what to say. It was true enough that Sir Sykes had led but a sequestered and restricted life, with so many opportunities for worldly gratification; but this the ex-Lancer had always set down to eccentricity or a disordered liver. The popular belief which attributed the baronet's morose melancholy to his early bereavement, had never seemed to Jasper other than mythical.

'Ill-got gains,' said Sir Sykes, pursuing his train of thought, 'do not, they say, prosper. Mine were not strictly ill got. The great inheritance that fell to me was not won by dark and crooked means, not even by time-serving and cajolery. I am blameless as regards that. But I do assure

you, my son, that if I had the power to put back the hands of Time's inexorable dial, and be young again, with creditors clutching at the price of my commission, and duns besetting me at every turn, I would cheerfully give up Carbery, to be once more the needy man I was when I left India.'

This really seemed to Jasper so very unreasonable, that he did not know how to reply. His notion was that there were, for a gentleman of high degree, only two good and substantial grounds for unhappiness—an overdrawn balance, and the meeting with cold-shoulders and averted eyes in club and betting-ring. Still it was incumbent on him to make some reply.

'I think, sir,' he said, 'that a change would do you good—change of air, change of scene, and that sort of thing. Even a scamper over the continent would be delightful after the monotony of this'—he was going to say 'old jail,' but checked himself, and said—'style of existence' instead.

'All I can hope for now is to go down to my grave in quiet,' resumed Sir Sykes, ignoring his son's not ill-intended advice. 'I should not like my remaining years to be overshadowed by a cloud of shame, or to have Scorn's finger pointed at me. Believe me, Jasper, that when I ask you to offer your hand in marriage to Miss Willis I do not do so without a sufficient reason. It may be immaterial to you whether or not the finger of Reproach be directed against your father; but you cannot be indifferent to your own interest, and that is deeply concerned in your compliance with my urgent wishes. Here'—throwing it on the table—'is a draught of my instructions to Mr Wilkins. Your marriage settlements and the deed entailing the estate can, if you please, be signed on the same day.'

Jasper shrugged his shoulders with a deprecatory action, took up the paper, and glanced at its contents. Nothing could by possibility be more explicit. Carbery Chase with its broad acres was henceforth, like any other entailed estate, to pass from father to son according to the strictest rules of primogeniture. Entailers are prone to tie up their lands by will; but in this case the unusual expedient of a deed was to render Jasper's rights over the property independent of Sir Sykes's pleasure.

'Nothing could be more handsome, I must own,' said Jasper, a little sheepish in his deportment as he concluded the perusal.

'Say rather, that nothing could better prove the necessity of the case,' retorted the baronet peevishly. 'I presume, now that I have met your wishes, that you will no longer object to conform to mine.'

'You mean, sir, about Miss Willis?' asked Jasper, to be quite sure of his fact before pledging himself.

Sir Sykes nodded silently. What he understood was probably undreamed of by his son, whose moral fibre was of a coarser quality. This unnatural bargaining, this higgling over a marriage on one hand and the reversion of an estate on the other, was to him absolute torture. He had set great store by men's opinion of him, had prized his fair renown and worldly repute above all things, and now he felt himself humbled both in his own eyes and in Jasper's by the humiliating concession to which he had been brought.

'I am ready, sir,' said Jasper slowly, 'to submit

my judgment to yours in this business. After your great kindness—here Sir Sykes made an impatient movement, but uttered no word—‘I can do no less. Miss Willis, I have no doubt of it, will make an excellent wife, as wives go. I have to propose, however, and to be accepted, if I am.’—

Sir Sykes did not appear inclined to discuss the probability of his son's proposals being rejected by his ward.

‘You will have an ample income to begin with,’ he said shortly; ‘nor do I care how soon, in the course of nature, Carbery devolves upon you. Rest and peace, rest and peace! Could I but insure these for the short residue of my life, I should ask no more.’

‘Well, well!’ returned Jasper, with a blunt indifference to his father's feelings, of which he was himself but half aware. ‘The women at any rate like a wedding, so Lucy and Blanche no doubt will be pleased to be bride's-maids. And we shall have to quarter the arms of Willis in the old Denzil escutcheon. By-the-by, what are the arms of Willis? It's odd how little I know of the fair Ruth's lineage.’

‘Take my word for it,’ said Sir Sykes, rising in anger, ‘that the girl has good blood in her veins, better it may be than your own.’ Having said which, the baronet left the room without a word of explanation.

‘Particularly shady business,’ soliloquised Jasper, when the door had closed upon his father. ‘However, I am the slave of my word—when it's made worth my while—and I'll speak to Miss—Willis before I sleep.’

LIGHTNING.

Of all the risks to which mankind is exposed, there is probably none so inaccurately estimated as that of injury from lightning. The ordinary risks of life are calmly considered and truly appreciated; but the danger arising from the electrical disturbances which shew themselves in thunder-storms excites in many folks a feeling of dread that renders the mind incapable of the calm application needed to estimate a chance at its real value. Hence there is a tendency to magnify this danger, and the tendency is strong in proportion as the nervous system of the individual is weak and his imagination active. In other cases, the fear of danger is diminished by being habituated to it; so powerful indeed is the influence of habit in this respect, that in time our apprehensions vanish altogether, though their cause remain unabated.

There can be no doubt that the awe evoked by a thunder-storm is in some measure due to the singularly imposing character of the manifestations. A flash of lightning comes upon the eye with a rapidity and a vividness that cannot fail to impress the mind with the idea of tremendous force; and to deepen the impression, the flash is followed by a crashing peal of thunder, a sound that is alone in its grandeur. Thus our two chief senses are acted upon successively in a degree that is never otherwise reached. Another cause of the feeling of dread is ignorance of the nature of the agencies at work. To the scientific man, who sees in the storm the actions of a force with which he is familiar, obeying laws that to him are well

known, this cause is of little import. But to the man who is without this knowledge, the manifestations of this apparently irresistible force present themselves in a different light. The erratic course of the lightning suggests to his mind an uncontrolled power; a suggestion that is repeated by the irregularity of the interval between the discharges, and the strangely destructive effects which these discharges sometimes occasion.

These are the causes of what may be described as the general dread of lightning, that apprehension which every one feels in some degree during the continuance of a thunder-storm. The degree, as we have already remarked, is determined by the nervous organisation of the individual and the strength of his imagination. But beyond this vague feeling of impending danger which all share in common, there is aroused in some persons by the outbreak of a thunder-storm an inordinate dread, an overpowering terror, that cannot be accounted for wholly in this way. The source of this exceptional fear of lightning is generally to be traced to early impressions. The imagination of the child has been violently and painfully excited. In the very tender years of life the imagination is extremely active, and the mind is particularly impressionable. The child that has been thrown into a state of terror by a supposed ghostly apparition will, especially if he be of a nervous temperament, carry a dread of supernatural appearances into mature life; and though the man may, by the force of his reason and will, repress the feeling, it will nevertheless arise whenever occasion for it recurs. There are few who do not suffer in this way from the indiscretion of nurse-girls or elder playmates, the undue fear of lightning being among the commonest evils induced by these means.

The causes of an excessive dread of lightning having been ascertained, the remedies are obvious. That degree of apprehension, hardly amounting to fear, which is occasioned by the nature of the phenomenon, admits of no modification; nor is it desirable that the moderate and proper sense of awe called forth by what is perhaps the grandest exhibition of natural forces, should be suppressed. But the evil of a fear arising from ignorance, and particularly of that excessive fear which is a source of disquietude and shame to those in whom it is found, calls for protest. As better than cure, prevention alone is to be looked to. Excessive dread is indeed hardly to be described as less than a malady which when once established admits of no cure. This fact should lead parents to take every possible care that no impressions of the character in question be made in early childhood. When the dread, however, arises from simple ignorance, all that is needed is to remove the ignorance. It is with this object in view that we offer a few plain remarks on the nature of lightning and on the laws which it obeys.

When a cloud becomes charged with electricity, the earth also becomes charged in a like degree with electricity of an opposite kind; if the cloud is charged ‘positively,’ as it is termed in technical language, the earth is charged ‘negatively.’ The air between the cloud and the earth acts as the dielectric or non-conducting substance which keeps the two kinds of electricity apart. This arrangement of two charged conducting surfaces separated

by a non-conducting substance constitutes what is known as a 'condenser,' a familiar example of which is found in the Leyden jar. When a condenser is charged, the electricities upon the opposite surfaces have a tendency to get together, and the tendency becomes stronger as the 'charge,' or quantity of electricity increases. The force which impels the two electricities together is known to men of science as 'electro-motive force,' and the state which it sets up is called 'tension.' It is easy to see that if the tension goes on increasing by an accumulation of electricity on the separated surfaces, there must come a time when it will equal and exceed the resistance offered by the intervening stratum of air. When this time comes, the electricities pass through the air to each other, from the cloud to the earth, and from the earth to the cloud. But as the resistance to be overcome is very great—air offering much greater resistance to objects traversing it than most people would suppose—much heat is generated, and this heat shews itself in the flash which we call lightning. Thus the lightning-flash is the visible manifestation of the heat generated by the passage of the electricities through the air. It is a well-known scientific fact that electricity always chooses the path that offers to it the least resistance; and, as in the case of lightning, this point or path is continually changing, in consequence of the motion of the cloud and other varying circumstances, the successive discharges occur in different places.

It will now be readily perceived why tall buildings, such as church spires, are more liable to be 'struck,' to use the common expression, than structures of a less height. Buildings may be constructed, wholly or in part, of substances possessing greater conducting power than the air, and as they rise to considerable distances above the earth's surface, they lessen by so much the thickness of the stratum of air to be traversed, and diminish in a corresponding degree the resistance to be overcome between cloud and earth. Of two edifices equally conductive, the higher will thus occasion the greater reduction of resistance, and consequently the discharge will take place directly over this building, and through it to and from the ground. The effects of the passage of electricity through the building will be determined by the degree of conductivity possessed by the latter, or in other words, by the resistance it offers. If it be constructed of metal, or if it have a continuous piece of metal running through it from top to bottom, the electric charge will pass without causing in it any visible effect, because little or no resistance is opposed. For this reason, buildings, as the reader doubtless knows, have often affixed to them for their protection a metal rod called a lightning-conductor. But if there be no metal employed in the construction of the building, or if the metal used be in separate and detached pieces, there will be great resistance to be overcome, and the force required to overcome it may be sufficient to cause the destruction of the building, or at least the displacement of those parts where the resistance is greatest. The heat generated by the passage of electricity through badly conducting substances is often great enough to set combustible materials on fire.

Instead of a building, the object causing the

diminution of resistance may be a tree. The moisture contained in a living tree renders it a moderately good conductor of electricity, and on that account it is more likely to attract lightning than an ordinary stone building. So also the human body, which is a better conductor than a tree, may by occupying a favourable situation become part of the line of least resistance; in such a case the passage of the electric charge will take place through it, as it did through the tree and the building. But since both the tree and the human or any other animal body possess a low degree of conductivity, the consequent force exerted may cause their destruction. Thus we see that a body is 'struck' when it becomes part of a line of least resistance; and from a consideration of the foregoing facts, we are able to perceive when a body is likely to become part of that line. We also see that good conductors, such as the metals, are unaltered by the passage of the charge through them; while imperfect conductors, such as trees and animal bodies, are either injured or destroyed by it. The electric fluid revenges itself, as it were, upon whatever offers resistance to its course.

We may now endeavour to ascertain under what conditions damage from lightning is possible, and what are the means by which the risk may be lessened or avoided. An isolated tree, standing either upon a wide plain or upon an eminence, is obviously likely to determine a lightning discharge, to 'attract the lightning,' to use a common expression. The top of the tree is the nearest point to the cloud; and since the tree is a better conductor than the air, a line drawn vertically through it to the cloud marks the shortest and easiest course along which the electricities may pass. If, when the charged cloud arrives directly over this point, the tension is sufficient to overcome the resistance along that line, a discharge will take place, and the tree will be struck. But if the tension be not sufficient, the cloud will pass harmlessly over. Hence it appears that a person standing during a thunder-storm beneath a tree so situate is exposed to some risk. On no account, therefore, should the traveller take refuge under an isolated tree; generally he will do well to avoid its neighbourhood altogether; but should he be overtaken by the storm when on a plain with no shelter near, the tree may still be made to afford him some protection. If he take up a position near it, but not under its branches, he will probably escape unhurt should the lightning descend upon it. The safest distance from the tree is that which is equal to its height. To approach much nearer than this is to incur the risk of being within the influence of the stroke; to remain at a much greater distance away is to place one's self in the same conditions of isolation as the tree itself. It will have been remarked by all observers of the phenomenon that whenever a tree has been struck by lightning it has generally occupied an isolated position. In describing the position as one of isolation, however, it is not meant that the tree is necessarily standing alone, but that it is not one of a numerous group. When there are many trees together, their collective conductivity is often sufficient to cause an indestructive discharge of the electricity. This is especially likely to happen when the trees are wet with rain, for then their surfaces are covered with a film of water, which is

a good conductor. For this reason, the danger from lightning is much less after rain has begun to fall, than before when everything is dry.

It appears, therefore, that the safest situation during a thunder-storm is in the midst of a wood, particularly if the neighbourhood of the tallest trees be avoided. In such a place of shelter, the traveller may take refuge in full assurance that he will there be effectually shielded from harm. The greatest risk of injury from lightning is undoubtedly incurred by persons travelling across a wide and very flat plain, because in such a situation they are the only elevated objects. To lessen the risk, which may here be somewhat serious, advantage should be taken of whatever undulations of surface may exist, to keep upon the lowest ground. No doubt the prostrate position would in these circumstances afford greater security than the erect.

It happens not unfrequently that animals are killed by lightning under a tree to which they had taken themselves for shelter. In these cases, the tree is struck partly in consequence of its isolation, and partly on account of the presence of the animals beneath it. Usually there are several and often many of them assembled together, huddled probably by terror into contact one with another. The air, heated by their bodies, rises above them laden with moisture, derived mainly from their breath. Who has not noticed the cloud of vapour that in the early morning and in certain states of the weather hangs over a flock of sheep or a herd of kine? The column of moist air ascending through the branches of the tree towards the cloud, offers, in consequence of the comparatively high conductivity of water, a favourable passage for the electricity. A herd of cattle under an isolated tree is thus exposed to a double risk; also it is evident that these animals are in the open country less secure from injury than human beings, who cannot affect the atmosphere in a like degree.

The danger from lightning in a dwelling-house is exceedingly small. The materials used in building are, with the sole exception of the metals, very bad conductors; and the form of a house is not that which is favourable to the reception of an electric charge. Towers and spires, the latter especially, possess that form; but these structures are nearly always protected by conductors affixed to them. It has been suggested that chimneys may, through the conductivity of their soot-lining, attract lightning. But as communication with moist earth is interrupted below the fireplace, the influence of the soot in diminishing the total resistance is compensated. A house around the roof of which there is a system of water-pipes reaching to the ground is very effectually protected. The timid may, however, put their fears to rest by affixing a conductor to the highest chimney, and taking care that the lower end be carried sufficiently deep into the ground to be always in moist earth.

A consideration of the preceding facts leads to the conclusion, that the risk of personal injury from lightning is necessarily small. The conditions favourable to the occurrence of accidents are few, and of such a nature that the combinations requisite for their fulfilment cannot often take place. There are but two situations in which danger is to be apprehended—namely on the

portions of a flat district that are destitute of trees; and beneath the branches of an isolated tree standing in a spot that is not dominated at a short distance by higher ground. But even here the danger is not necessarily certain, for thunder-clouds do not by any means invariably discharge to the ground.

The infrequency of accident from lightning is known alike to those who are ignorant of the laws which the storm obeys, and to those who can correctly estimate the risk from a full understanding of the circumstances and conditions under which its forces are set in action. This knowledge should alone go far towards shewing how exaggerated are the alarms felt by the timid. But small as is the risk, it may be made still less by an observance of the precautions which have been here pointed out. Attention to these will give almost perfect security to the person; and a knowledge of this fact, combined with the alidity to accurately estimate the amount of risk in all circumstances, should relieve the mind of painful apprehensions.

ANOTHER TALE OF HOMBURG.

My friend Karl Otto Fichte had been for many years at the head of the medical practice at Homburg. He had studied in London, was married to an Englishwoman, and had formed another bond of love for all things English in a devoted admiration of Shakspeare, whose difficulties and beauties he was in the habit of discussing in papers contributed to the *Jahrbücher* of the German Shakspeare Society. His love of children was such as is perhaps only that of kind-hearted husbands who are childless, and was illustrated by the countless portraits which, together with cases of stuffed birds, covered so many of his walls. For some years I was in the habit of passing my short holiday at Homburg for the sake of my old fellow-student's society. After our pipes were lit at night, Doctor Fichte told me many a story of the worst side of the bad specimens of humanity, flocking to a spot in order to repair self-abused constitutions, and to feed their wild hopes of restoring broken fortunes. Always marked as his sketches were by the meanness and corruption with which the confirmed gambler's whole nature festers, they were here and there relieved by some little touch of goodness or beauty, that threw into deeper shade the main features of the subject. The Doctor was at his best when a child was one of his characters, as in the story of the *Martyns* recorded in these columns (October 17, 1874). The following narrative, which has long lingered in my memory, contains, I think, sufficient interest, simple as it is, to point a moral. I give it in Dr Fichte's own words.

A few summers ago, my wife's attention was much drawn to an English couple frequenting the public resorts here. The husband seemed about fifty years of age, much broken in health and spirits, but bearing in his face the impress of ability and mental culture. His mean attire and unhealthy look contrasted strangely with the faultless dress and self-possessed mien of the wife, and with the bonniness of a little girl of some three years, their never-failing companion, whose

rosy cheeks, bright honest eyes, and winsome naturalness were as much opposed to the broken-down appearance of the one parent as to the glossy self-consciousness of the other. Fondness for the child, however, seemed to be their common virtue; and the group sufficiently interested the crowd of dawdlers to form a point of some attraction in the gardens and at the Brunnen. Shy and somewhat nervous towards strangers, the little girl rather repelled the advances of most admirers, preferring to form steadier friendships with the officials of the Kurhaus and the girls serving at the springs. The father, shortly after I had first heard of him, came to consult me; when I was not long in determining that his yellow withered face, glassy deep-sunk eyes, and lame gait betokened a confirmed use of opium. It was the usual story he had to tell. Adopted as a cure for severe neuralgic pain, the drug from a remedy grew into a pleasure, and ripened into a necessity. The particulars I learned from him from time to time, which I was able to supplement subsequently by his wife's narrative, will shew what manner of patient I had to treat, and how far I could look to the wife for aid in effecting his cure.

George Evenden—as I will call him—after some years' practice at the English bar, had been appointed to a judgeship in Jamaica soon after his marriage. Though a clever and accomplished man, he was too idle and self-indulgent to make any sure progress in an arduous profession at home; and distasteful though the exile was to him, he did not hesitate to accept the proffered appointment in the West Indies, where a few months later he was joined by his wife and first-born child. Hitherto the married life of the Evendens had not been altogether a happy one. Mrs Evenden, the only child of a naval officer, left motherless as an infant, had known no other home than the occasional shelter of the houses of relatives during her holidays from school. Handsome, clever, and ambitious as a school-girl, she, to her credit, grew into an accomplished woman, in every way fitted for the life of hard dependence which she had foreseen would be her lot. With strong health, remarkable coolness of nerve, and great powers of fascination, she was unable to disguise from those who sought to be her real friends that she had a cold heart and somewhat lax principles. Such was Harriet Merton, when at twenty years of age she met Evenden during the assizes in a town in the south of England. A short acquaintance irregularly formed led to an engagement of marriage, and in place of starting in life as a governess, she speedily became the wife of a man double her age. Both soon owned to themselves that they had made a mistake. Entirely opposed to his wife in character, tastes, and views of life, Evenden, naturally fickle, grew disappointed and angry with himself for marrying, caring not to win the esteem of a woman whom he had never really loved; while she, absorbed in herself, never even tried to love a man whom she did not respect for worldly eminence. The birth of a child, as a new pleasure shared by both parents, produced for a time a happier feeling between them; but soon the wife tired of her new duties, became discontented with her uncongenial surroundings; while Evenden, alienated by her want of sympathy, by nature faint-hearted, drifted into bad habits, and losing his health through

intemperance, sought relief in the besetting remedy of opium.

Necessarily resigning his post as judge, he took to coffee-planting, with the natural result of failing in an occupation that left him free to indulge in a vicious habit. Harriet, who cared for her children—of which there were then two—only so far as they did credit to her own talents and attractions, occupied herself in shining in the society of the adjoining camp at Newcastle, and was by no means delighted at the thought of returning to England; a step which, long advised by medical friends, was at last decided on by the unusual outbreak of yellow fever among the troops, whose cantonment of tents, dotted picturesquely among tree-ferns and plantains on the mountain-sides, had nearly touched the inclosure of Evenden's house. The death of their eldest child on the passage home seems to have awakened the father to a sense of his physical and moral debasement; and he had come here with the evidently honest intention of throwing off his evil habit. Harriet too had been steadied by her loss, and was able to find genuine amusement at any rate in seeing little Violet happy.

The first thing I endeavoured to impress upon my patient was the necessity of strict truthfulness in his confidences with me on the subject of his habit, for I knew by experience that the deceit of opium-eaters is one of the hardest points that we have to assail in attempting their cure; secondly, that the task of curing himself was one that *could* be accomplished; next, that for some weeks he must be prepared for much suffering, which it was out of the power of any doctor directly to alleviate; and lastly, I urged him of all things never to give up the smallest ground gained in the struggle. The administration of the opium was to be under Mrs Evenden's sole control, the very place of its keeping to be concealed from him. His usual daily allowance of eighty grains was to be at once reduced to sixty grains, divided into four equal portions; the end of the first week was to see it reduced to forty grains; the end of the second week to twenty grains; and so on until the fortieth day, which I fixed for its entire abandonment. I prescribed valerian and bromide of potassium, and advised a moderate indulgence in tobacco.

For the first few days my patient suffered but little beyond extreme restlessness and inability to sleep, and there was even then apparent a slight improvement in his health and spirits; but in the second week he began to be racked by pain, that rising beneath the shoulder-blades, crept up over neck, ear, and eye, while he seemed, he said, to be on fire all over his body just beneath the skin. The only sleep he could now get was a change from the reality of bodily torture to a vivid succession of ghastly dreams ending in some fearful catastrophe, that roused him, bathed in perspiration from sole to crown. The third and fourth weeks were, as I had anticipated, his worst time. Each hour had for him the duration of a day; each day seemed strangely prolonged into a period that knew no reckoning. Never free from acute pain, he was perpetually on the move, and if he tried to sit, he was instantly impelled to shift from chair to chair. His irritability became almost maniacal, and often he told me would he bite his tongue till the blood

came, in the effort to master it. Inpatient of the slightest contradiction, he was, though very rarely, almost unkind to his much-loved child, who was as much with him as I allowed her to be during this trying time. 'Dear little father'—as she was wont to call him—'dear little father, can you have me?' was a frequent query I heard outside his door. On entering and finding him tearing up and down the room with hot flushed cheeks, she would try to stop him with the plaintive words: 'Father, do you love me? Yes; you do love me a little bit; now you tell me about Beauty and the Beast;' and the two were at once on the floor, poring over some gorgeous picture-book. Then when the father could sit still no longer, Violet would mount his back, and order him to career across the room, kissing him on each cheek for being her 'dear old horse.' Or clasping her round the waist with his fingers locked in front of her, he would swing her backwards and forwards between his legs till the pair were breathless. Once when his irritability overcame him, and he addressed her rather less tenderly than usual as 'Child!' with the blood mantling in her cheeks, she went up to a large looking-glass, and having carefully smoothed her hair, running up to him, smothered his hand with kisses, and said: 'No, father; I'm your little maiden now; look!' alluding, I found, to an old flirtation between the pair of lovers, in which the designation was derived from a certain arrangement of hair. The poor man clasped her passionately in his arms, and then sinking on to a sofa, burst into an irrepressible flood of tears.

We had reached the end of the fourth week. The opium was reduced to five grains a day, distributed into ten portions; the appetite had become enormous, and the walking powers unabated. The deficiency of sleep was great, and the liver much disordered; but I had great hopes of success, for I saw that my patient was honestly doing battle with his enemy. Five weeks had passed; growing feebler, he could not wind up his watch, or guide a pen without the assistance of the other hand, and complained especially of a constant cold perspiration down the spine. His pulse was slow and heavy, the face flushed, and fingers swollen. At last, after two days' allowance of half a grain, the fortieth day was passed absolutely without opium.

Was the victory won? There is, as you doubtless know, one great point of advantage that attends the attempted cure of opium-eating, as compared with that of excessive drinking, or even tobacco-smoking, and this is that there is no *specific* desire for the drug as pleasurable. The patient yearns for freedom from pain, but the opium is not an object of craving for its own delights, as is the drunkard's dram or the forbidden pipe. But though I had believed that Evenden's desire to be cured was sincere, I had been glad to know that his wife kept the drug, and that the key of the drawer was on the châtelaine by her side. I would that I could have trusted her for that natural support which a wife could render in guiding her husband from the danger of a relapse. But I had been troubled by her constant absence from home, and so it was but rarely that I could see her to give my necessary instructions. Incredible as it had seemed to me, she at once opposed the plan I now suggested of taking her husband away

for a few days' change of scene. A little later I was enlightened as to much that puzzled me in her.

One night after supper, on entering one of the rooms of the Kurhaus, I was attracted by a knot of by-standers absorbed in watching the play of a lady seated at the roulette table. It was Harriet Evenden, whose child I had found but three hours ago trying to comfort her father, as he lay racked on a sofa, with a favourite story told in her own words. Most elegantly dressed, without a sign of excitement on her handsome features, Mrs Evenden was watching the fortunes of five napoleons, which she had pushed on *à cheval* to the line separating the zero from one of the adjacent numbers. *Messieurs, faites le jeu. Le jeu est-il fait? Rien ne va plus* (Gentlemen, make your game. Is the game made? No more is staked); and the ivory ball tumbled into the compartment bearing the same number as one of those touched by the five napoleons. The croupier, after settling other gains and losses, counted out seventeen times five gold pieces; and the winner, raking up her ninety napoleons as coolly as they had been dealt to her, proceeded apparently to cast up on a card the result of her ventures. I left, distressed by what was to me a very sorry sight indeed. The difficulty of Evenden's permanent cure was to my mind enormously increased, not only because her pursuit would make her forgetful of, perhaps indifferent to his vice, but because the knowledge of her conduct, if disapproved of by him, was the very thing to snap his weak powers of self-control. More than once, when we had been talking over the practice of gambling here, he had—I then remembered—congratulated himself on being too poor to play. 'I have never been a gambler, Doctor,' he said; 'and I trust that this one virtue will not leave me.' And as I thought of their dear little Violet, I quite shuddered over my own forecast.

After much perplexing thought, I determined to speak to Mrs Evenden on the subject of her playing, though the task of reforming a gambler seemed yet more uncertain than that of curing an opium-eater. The next afternoon, when I had seen her husband in the gardens seated near the band, with Violet close by, making friends with some young soldiers, I made my way to their house in the Untere Promenade, and found, as I had thought probable, Harriet away from home. After shutting a little gate on the balcony, which opening outwards down a steep flight of steps, I had always looked upon as a possible source of danger for the child, I hastened to the Kurhaus, and found Mrs Evenden at the roulette table, as before the centre of some little attraction. On seeing me, she bowed as composure as if she had met me in the gardens, and went on with her play. Getting round to her side, I begged her to come out; and on returning to her house, I openly remonstrated with her on the subject of gambling. Without the slightest discomposure of manner, and in perfect good-temper, she entered on the particulars of her married life that I have given you, told me that she had sought in the distraction of play a substitute for home pleasures, and the means of indulging tastes denied her by the habits of a husband whom she could not respect. After a long conversation, during which I spoke plainly and sometimes warmly, I left with her promise to

accompany her husband and my wife in a ten days' expedition that I had planned for them in the Black Forest, and to forsake the Kurhaus for the few days pending their departure.

Shattered, feeble, and suffering though Evenden still was, I felt very confident that time and self-control only were needed to restore him to health and vigour. Happy enough he seemed too when, two days later, at a very early hour, I caught sight of the inseparable pair just outside the town, Violet in wild delight mounted on one of our little dog-drawn milk-carts, urging on the dog and beaming with merriment. 'You see me, Doctor. I'm Peggy in the low-backed car. My fluffy kitten is the chicken Peggy is picking. Little Father's the lover who envies the chicken. You be the man at the turnpike bar, and scratch your old poll.' And then we all three went through the whole ditty of that charming Irish song *The Low-backed Car*, to the amused wonderment of the kind owner of the cart. Dear child! Happy in the ignorance of her parents' faults, might she never have occasion to rue them, and above all never wear the fetters that mind and body forge for themselves out of vice!

In the afternoon of the self-same day, as I was dismissing my last patient, Mrs Evenden entered this room. With an air of almost contemptuous triumph, she told me in unmoved accents that her husband had got at some opium that morning while she was out; that she had returned home to find him playing and talking with Violet with an incoherent wildness, which after some hours had given place to heavy stupor, in which she had just left him. As far as she could gather from the child's account, her husband had taken the opium out of a little ivory box which Violet had discovered in the depths of a work-basket, and begged him to unscrew for her. This box, in which Evenden used to carry his pocket-board of the drug, had been long missing, and had been by my desire the object of much search. As I feared possible, the sudden temptation had broken down the resistance of weeks. Driving at once to their house, on entering the drawing-room I found the unhappy man stretched on the sofa in heavy torpor, broken only by an occasional convulsive twitching in his face and limbs. The furniture was in wild disorder, and littered about were dolls, rugs, and various articles of dress, as though father and daughter had been acting some favourite nursery story. While engaged in rousing Evenden from a stupor, which by its rapid increase, together with the ghastly features and almost imperceptible pulse, marked the large quantity of the dose, I heard his wife outside the door asking for Violet. 'Is she not with her father, madam?' answered the servant. At that moment, instinctively my eye caught sight of the open balcony-gate. With a fearful thought I bounded outside and looked down into the garden. In another moment I was by the side of Violet, lying at the foot of the steps with her Red-Riding-Hood cloak tumbled over her head—still and silent in the beauty of a painless death. The neck had been broken in the fall, and her little spirit had taken its flight in calm and sinless peace. Probably after the morning's wild fun was over, and the horrid poison had had its full play, Violet failing to rouse her father from his unconscious state, had run out frightened to the balcony, to look or call for help, and rushing

against the treacherous gate, had fallen headlong below. When Evenden, on awaking from the prolonged sleep which followed the stupor, asked for Violet, I told him that, though he had failed in resisting the sudden onslaught of his foe, I was now certain of his final victory over opium; for she who had been his loving comrade in his first effort, would henceforth, as his ministering angel, gird him with fresh strength for the last assault.

And I was not wrong. When we had strewed the sad little grave with flowers, Mrs Evenden left Homburg on a visit to England, and her husband took up his abode with me. This time the hope of cure was assured by his abiding sorrow. After six months' sojourn he left me, a wholly different man from the invalid I had at first known. Still bearing of course some effects of the long self-indulgence, he had a look of strength and patient endurance that foretold the certainty of a lasting cure. The light had departed from his day; but he was truly a wiser and better man. Harriet Evenden, sobered by their loss, reformed the defects, if unable to change the nature of her character. In the village where they have fixed their home by the sea, they have from small beginnings established a cottage hospital for convalescent children; and by the wife's able management and exertions, the husband, in his fondness for the little patients, is able to perpetuate his enduring love for her who had been for three short years the one sweetness of a self-imbittered life.

THE AMERICAN ARCTIC EXPEDITION.

UNDISMAYED by past reverses, but rather incited by them to renewed efforts, America is now contemplating a fresh expedition to the North Pole. Mr James Gordon Bennett, the enterprising proprietor of the *New York Herald*, being its chief promoter. As to the motives which actuate Mr Bennett in this fresh instance of energy, it is no part of our purpose to inquire. From whatever cause, Mr Bennett is the moving spirit in the undertaking now on foot; and he is ably seconded by an officer of merit and experience, Captain Howgate. This gentleman has given his enthusiastic adherence to the project, and will in all probability take, if he has not already assumed, command of the expedition. Our readers will be aware that the government of the United States has been asked to enrol into its service and commission with its authority a band of picked officers and men, and to allow the steamer *Pandora* to sail under the American flag upon a Polar expedition. The Senate has expressed approval of the project, and passed a bill to appropriate fifty thousand dollars towards the expenses; and there is little doubt entertained that Congress will ratify with its formal sanction a scheme so powerfully supported. Possibly before these lines appear in print the consent may have been given. Some brief particulars therefore of the mode in which the expedition is to be managed may not be without interest to English readers.

The object of this expedition is to settle a colony of hardy and resolute men at some favourable point on the borders of the Polar Sea, and to provide it with all modern appliances for overcoming the physical obstacles in the pathway

to the Pole, and for resisting the effects of cold, sickness, and isolation. This is in accordance with the recommendation of the German government Commission, which again is based on the plan advocated by Lieutenant Weyprecht. The locality to be selected for such a station, moreover, is also that mentioned by Weyprecht—namely the eastern shore of Greenland. Captain Howgate has chosen as the site of the proposed colony the shore of Lady Franklin Bay, having been influenced in his selection by a circumstance of supreme importance—the fact that a seam of coal was found existing there and easily workable when the *Discovery*, under Captain Nares, visited the place. The theory upon which this station is to be established is both simple and plausible; but it remains to be seen whether it will work out so neatly in practice as it does on paper. We will quote Captain Howgate's own words, as communicated to the *New York Herald*. He says: 'When Captain Hall reached the upper extremity of Robeson's Channel, the look-out of the *Polaris* reported open water in sight and just beyond the pack which surrounded the vessel and impeded further progress. This open water was afterwards seen from the Cape at the northern opening of Newman's Bay; and it was the opinion of the crew of the ill-fated vessel that if she had been but the fraction of an hour earlier in reaching the channel, they could have steamed unobstructed to the Pole itself or to the shores of such lands, if any exist, as may bound the so-called open Polar Sea. We know that they did not succeed, but were forced to winter almost within sight of this sea; and subsequently disheartened by the loss of their prudent commander, abandoned the enterprise. Where this open water was found, Captain Nares, in 1875 and 1876, found solid impenetrable ice, through which no vessel could force its way, and over which it was equally impossible for sledge-parties to work. These facts appear to shew that within the Arctic Circle the seasons vary as markedly as in more temperate southern latitudes, and that the icy barriers to the Pole are sometimes broken up by favouring winds and temperature. To get further north or to reach the Pole, prompt advantage must be taken of such favouring circumstances; and to do this with the least expenditure of time, money, and human life, it is essential that the exploring party be on the ground at the very time the ice gives way and opens the gateway to the long-sought prize. Hence the idea of having a colony of navigators at hand ready at this opportunity to take advantage of it.'

So speaks Captain Howgate; but if we are to pay him the compliment of crediting him with anything like an accurate knowledge of his subject, it must be confessed that there is a difficulty in reconciling his theory with the experience of Captain Nares upon this question of an 'open Polar Sea.' So far from discovering any signs of occasional dispersion of the massive and rugged pack-ice, and the consequent 'breaking up of the icy barriers to the Pole,' Captain Nares found ice 'of unusual age and thickness'; so remarkable in its nature as to lead to the general opinion that it was the accumulation of many years if not centuries, that the sea was never open, and that progress through it or over it to the Pole was impossible with our present resources. Impressed firmly

with this conviction, Captain Nares gave to the huge barrier which stopped the way the name of the 'Sea of Ancient Ice'; or in terms savouring less of romance and more of hard geological science, the Palæocrystic Sea. On the other hand, Captain Howgate's view is shared by no less bold a man in his opinion Captain Nares's Palæocrystic Sea is 'a simple absurdity,' and who strongly advocates the formation of a colony at some point in Smith Sound, from which, when the opportunity came, a dash for the Pole could be made.

Leaving our readers, however, to dispose in the manner which may be most satisfactory to themselves of this contradiction of authorities upon the vexed question of the open Polar Sea, we may proceed to less debatable ground, and state how the remote little colony is to be kept in a state of efficiency and health. The men are to be supplied with them a good supply of materials for the erection of strong and substantial buildings to withstand the terrible cold to which they will be subjected. They are to have medicines, plenty of provisions, sledges and dogs for hunting and local exploring, and all the facilities possible for rendering existence as comfortable as their isolation and the low temperature will permit. They will be under a system of strict discipline, for experience in all Arctic expeditions has proved to demonstration over and over again how essential this is to a successful prosecution of work. It is also proposed to establish at Cape Union, nearly a degree further north, and where the *Alerik* found her winter-quarters, a subsidiary colony, with which a telegraphic communication is to be maintained.

After the return of the Nares expedition, the recital of the difficulties experienced in crossing the Palæocrystic Sea speedily gave rise to a suggestion that since it was impossible to travel along the surface, it might be feasible to pass over it. In other words, the expediency of pressing balloons into service came before the minds of experts, and received a very general and favourable consideration. It seems likely that some practical application of the suggestion will be attempted. Professor Samuel King, a distinguished American aeronaut, has entered upon a series of experiments with a view of determining the practicability of using balloons at the temperature and under the climatic influences of the Arctic regions. A great, indeed the principal difficulty is at once obtained by the fortunate discovery of coal at the site of the proposed colony, and the successful manufacture of the gas may be taken as a *fait accompli*; but the question of suitable material for the covering of the balloon itself is one of grave moment, although the Professor is sanguine of ultimately solving that problem. A French aeronaut, M. de Fonvielle, is also experimenting in the same direction, and is similarly hopeful of success.

In some general observations upon the scheme, Captain Howgate remarks that the failure of the admirably equipped Nares expedition is, in his opinion, due in great measure to the abnormally cold season and the exceptional character of the winds, which had resulted in the formation of ice-ridges running across the line of march; thus making progress difficult, slow, and dangerous.

It would have accomplished much, however, if it had done nothing more than determine the existence of coal at the *Discovery's* winter-quarters; and instead of discouraging fresh efforts, the result of the expedition should stimulate explorers of the Arctic regions to further endeavours. The unfavourable meteorological conditions encountered by Captain Nares and his gallant band may not exist during the present season, and indeed may not occur again for several years. The scheme has received the hearty commendation and support of well-known Arctic explorers, amongst whom may be named Captain Kennedy, Captain Markham, Dr Hayes, Lieutenant Payer, and Dr John Rae, and the officers and crew of the *Polaris*; and scientific men, naval officers, and private citizens throughout the United States are not less unanimous in their support and encouragement.

Whatever may be the results of the expedition, Englishmen, we feel sure, will unite in regarding it with generous and sympathetic interest and in heartily wishing it success.

EQUAL TO THE OCCASION.

WHEN Lord Liverpool was forming his ministry in 1822, he thought it absolutely necessary to have Canning at the Foreign Office, although aware the appointment would be obnoxious to George IV. The Duke of Wellington underook the unpleasant task of communicating Lord Liverpool's determination, and went to Brighton for that purpose. As soon as the king knew what was wanted of him, he broke out: 'Arthur, it is impossible! I said, on my honour as a gentleman, he should never be one of my ministers again. I am sure you will agree with me that I cannot do what I said on my honour as a gentleman I would not do.' Another man would have been silenced; but the great soldier, always equal to an emergency, replied: 'Pardon me, sir, but I don't agree with you at all. Your Majesty is not a gentleman.' The bold assertion startled the king; but the Duke went on: 'Your Majesty is not a gentleman, but the Sovereign of England, with duties to your people far above any to yourself; and these duties render it imperative that you should employ the abilities of Mr Canning.' 'Well, Arthur,' said the king, drawing a long breath, 'if I must, I must.'

Although he did not like being told he was no gentleman, George IV. had once at least, while Regent, forgotten he was one. That was when he flung a glass of wine in Colonel Hamlyn's face, with: 'Hamlyn, you are a blackguard!' The insulted officer could not return the compliment without committing something like treason; it was out of the question to challenge the Prince; while to let the insult pass unnoticed was equally impossible. The colonel filled his glass and threw the contents in the face of his neighbour, saying: 'His Royal Highness's toast; pass it on!' 'Hamlyn,' cried the Regent, 'you're a capital fellow! Here's your health!' And they were fast friends from that evening.

A Schleswig lass, whose betrothed had gone to seek a better fortune in America, under promise

to send for her as soon as he found himself able to support a wife, after patiently waiting a few years, grew sick of hope deferred, and took up with another sweetheart. She was no sooner fairly on with the new love, when a letter arrived from the old one, inclosing money to pay her passage to America. Here was a pretty dilemma; but the doubly-plighted damsel's mother found a way out of the difficulty. She sent out her second daughter in her sister's place. 'The two girls,' said she, 'are as like as two blades of grass, and it will be all one to him which of them he gets for a wife.' For the sake of all parties, it is to be hoped the cheated man was as easily victimised as the Spanish official who stopped the correspondent of an English newspaper attempting to cross the Republican lines, during the Civil War of 1874, with a demand for his passport—a non-existent document. 'Specials' are not readily prevented going where they have a mind to go, and the demand was met by the production of a fashionable tailor's bill, bearing the arms of sundry royal and imperial patrons on its face, and duly stamped and receipted. A pretty pantomimic performance ensued, the journalist trying to impress upon the official mind that the figures in the account represented his personal measurements, set down for the purpose of identification; and having succeeded in that, he pointed triumphantly to the stamp and the signature across it, as irrefragable proof of the official character of the document; and the half-satisfied, wholly mystified Spaniard let him go on his way, showering silent blessings on his tailor's head.

An unemployed actor, disinclined to rust in idleness, to say nothing of starving, determined to 'do the provinces' as an entertainer. The provinces, however, did not prove the happy hunting-ground he expected, and when he arrived at a certain small town in the north, his funds and his spirits were equally low. The latter were not raised by the worthy who had the letting of the 'hall' informing him a theatrical exhibition would be 'nae gude at a' there; but that if he gave a lecture on chemistry the place would be crowded. At this straw our desperate actor clutched. He would turn scientific lecturer, and chance it being discovered that he knew nothing of his subject. The hall was engaged, the bills distributed, his last coppers spent upon red-fire, brick-dust, iron-filings and some innocent powders; the time came, and the lecturer stood before a crowded audience, without any clear idea of what he was to say or do, save that he was going to perform the old experiment of producing hydrogen, and a new one of his own invention, which he hoped would bring the performance to a sudden end. The friendly hall-keeper had borrowed a pestle and mortar, a Leyden jar and two or three retorts, which with a few phisic bottles filled with bright-coloured waters, gave the table quite a scientific appearance. The pseudo-savant commenced by reading a few pages of a popular treatise on chemistry, by way of introduction, and then closing the book, trusted to impudence to pull him through; and pull him through it did. He says: 'I explained, with many mispronounced words, the hydrogen experiment; and then it occurred to me to arrange a little accident, which would perhaps make them nervous, and prepare them for what was to follow. This I easily did by thrusting a retort neck downwards

into the fire; the few drops of water condensed, and burst it with a loud report. I then proceeded to explain the dangerous nature of chemicals, dwell on gun-cotton, sudden death of experimentalists by fumes, &c., meanwhile filling my mortar with brick-dust and other harmless ingredients. Having wonned the audience up to the required pitch of nervousness, I dilated on the dangerous and uncertain nature of the compound I was mixing. I spoke of my bad health, and wound up by saying: "Startling and marvellous as the announcement may seem, it is nevertheless true, that were I to leave off stirring this mixture for one single second, the whole of this building and every one therein would be blown into unrecognisable atoms!" In less than two minutes there was not a soul left in the place except Mr Mactaggart and myself, who pitched the stuff away, and cheerfully divided the profits.

The artful actor's auditors shewed less coolness than the man, whose hat were riddled by a shooter of small birds, quietly asked: "Did you shoot at me, sir?" to which the maladroït but no way disconcerted sportsman replied: "O no, sir; I never hit what I fire at!" at once obviating the necessity of apologising, and mollifying the recipient of the erratic charge, as effectually as Provost Baker was mollified by a ready-witted laddie, brought before the Rutherglen Burgh Court for plucking forbidden fruit. Said the provost to the small offender: "If you had a garden, and pilfering boys were to break into it and steal your property, in what way would you like to have them punished?" Said the small offender to the provost: "Aweel, sir, I think I'd let them awa' for the first offence." Of course he was dismissed after being suitably admonished.

A young sub-lieutenant on sick-leave put up at an hotel in Poonah, and while recovering his health lost his heart, proposed to the fair thief, was accepted, and the wedding-day agreed upon. His colonel, however, happened to disapprove of sub-lieutenants narrying, and telegraphed a peremptory 'Join at once'.

The disgusted subaltern handed the unwelcome missive to his lady-love. She read it, and then, with a blush of maidenly simplicity, remarked: "I am glad your colonel approves of the match; but what a hurry he is in! I don't think I can be ready so soon, but I'll do my best; because, of course love, the colonel must be obeyed."

"You don't seem to understand the telegram, darling," said the dull fellow; "it quite upsets our plans; he says 'Join at once.'"

The lady looked up with an arch smile and replied: "It is you, dear, who don't seem to understand it. The colonel says plainly, 'Join at once.' Of course a nasty cat married immediately. What else can he possibly mean?"

"What else indeed?" exclaimed the enlightened lover, accepting the new reading without demur. So forty-eight hours afterwards the colonel received the message: "Your orders are obeyed. We were joined at once."

A woman's wit rarely fails her when she needs to exercise it. Madame Thierret, a popular French actress, was once travelling to Baden in a first-class carriage, although only provided with a second-class ticket. At Kehl her ticket was demanded by a German employé of the Company. A scene ensued, the actress pretending not to

understand the man. "If you gabble for two hours," said she, "it will be all the same." The German took her by the arm, for the purpose of ejecting her from the carriage, receiving a box on the ears that sent him reeling to the other side of the platform. This brought up a commissary, who inquired why she had struck the man. "Because he was insolent; he said all sorts of impertinent things to me," replied the actress. The officer thought he had caught her nicely, and grimly demanded how she knew that, since she pretended not to understand German. "Nonsense!" answered ready Madame Thierret; "when a dog wants to bite you, you understand it very well, although you do not talk doggerel." And the commissary wisely gave in.

A blind beggar on the Pont-Neuf entreated the charity of passers-by on the plea of being a poor blind man the father of two children. A gentleman who responded to the pitiful appeal saw the same man a few days afterwards at Asnières solliciting alms as a poor blind man the father of four children. "What!" said he—speaking of course in French—"have you had two children since I saw you in Paris last week?" "No, sir," was the unabashed reply; "but in Paris living is so dear that two children are sufficient to excite pity; in the country, I am obliged to have four at the very least, and even then find it hard to make both ends meet."

A French gentleman anxious to find a wife for a scapegrace nephew, went to a matrimonial agent, who handed him his list of lady clients. Examining this through, he lighted upon his wife's name, entered as desirous of obtaining a husband between the age of twenty-eight and thirty-five—a blonde preferred. Forgetting his nephew, he hurried home to announce his discovery to his wife. That lady was not at all disturbed. "O yes," said she; "that is my name; I put it down when you were so ill in the spring, and the doctor said we must prepare for the worst." This was at least an honest confession.

John Rives, a Washington journalist, obtained the promise of Major Hobbie, the Assistant-postmaster-general, that a friend of his should be taken on the post-office establishment the first time a vacancy occurred. Rives reminded the major of the promise whenever he saw him, always receiving for answer—"No vacancy." One day the candidate for office came, breathless with running, to Rives, begging him to come with him to the major. The pair were soon in the big man's presence. He guessed their errand, and hastened to pronounce the familiar words—"No vacancy." "O yes, there is," said the office-seeker; "Paine is dead, drowned in the canal; I have just seen his body on the bank." The Assistant-postmaster-general summoned his confidential clerk, and he, on the question being put to him by his chief, said there was no vacancy. Rives's friend insisted there must be, telling Mr Marr he had come straight from seeing Paine's body taken out of the water; but Marr, understanding what the major required of him, quietly answered: "There is no vacancy. Certainly, poor Paine is gone; but his place was filled an hour ago by the appointment of a man who saw him fall in." Rives took the hint, and never reminded Hobbie of his promise again.

Tired of telling men he had no room for a

brakeman, the superintendent of a Pennsylvanian line, upon the appearance of a new applicant, said: 'You want to brake on this road, do you? Well, you can sit down there. We have no vacancy just at present; but we kill about two brakemen a day, and I daresay in a few minutes I shall hear of some one losing an arm or a leg, and then you can have the job.' The man thought he would not wait, and would-be brakemen became scarce in that neighbourhood.

Braggarts are generally easy to be scared. A French shoemaker fond of boasting nothing could frighten him, proved an exception to the rule. Two young fellows resolved to put him to the test, so one shammed dead, and the other prevailed upon the shoemaker to watch the body through the night. Being busy, he took his tools with him and worked beside the corpse. About midnight a cup of black coffee was brought to him to keep him awake, and he was so exhilarated by the draught that he struck up a merry song, still plying his hammer vigorously. Suddenly the would-be corpse arose and said in sepulchral tones: 'When a man is in the presence of death he should not sing!' The shoemaker was startled, but recovering his self-possession in a moment, he dealt the corpse a blow on the head with his hammer as he uttered: 'When a man is dead he should not speak!'

There was a real dead man at a Paris boarding-house, and after he had been taken to his last lodging, it got about that he was in the unseemly habit of paying nightly visits to the room in which he died, and for a long time the room remained tenantless in consequence. At last it was taken by a student, who laughed at the idea of the place being haunted. Annoyed at his incredulity, two of the lodgers arrayed themselves in sheets, and glided into the room one night at that witching hour when grave-yards are supposed to yawn. With solemn step and slow, they stalked around the bed, until happening to glance behind, they beheld a sheeted figure watching their movements. This was more than they bargained for, and they were out of the room and in their own chambers almost before they knew it. Next morning they settled with the landlord and departed, never dreaming their intended victim had divined their intentions and paid them in their own coin. They were not quite equal to the occasion.

RAPID FULFILMENT OF 'PROPHECY.'

ABOUT seven years ago a little book was published in the Netherlands by a person assuming the name of 'Dr Dioscorides,' in which an attempt was made to picture the social changes which another century or two of invention would effect in the world. The book, after going through three editions in Dutch and also receiving some notice in a German translation, was done into English in the end of 1871. One prophecy of what 2071 A.D. might have in store for us has already been fulfilled in Professor Graham Bell's Telephone; five years instead of two hundred having thus sufficed for its realisation. The conceptions of Dr Dioscorides are so like the realities, that a few of his expressions are worthy of reproduction. 'Arrived at my hotel . . . methought I heard a kind of music, feeble yet melodious in the extreme. The sound approached as near

as possible that of the human voice; but still the quality was altogether different. Besides, no artist, male or female, was to be seen in the room.' A small box on the table was found to be the source of the sound; and taking the affair to be an ordinary musical-box, the narrator gazes with no little contempt and surprise on a crowd of serious enthusiastic men and women clustered round the table. Amusement and indignation resulted from his question as to the new 'musical instrument'; and it is explained that as the American papers had been writing in terms of most extravagant praise of a new singer who was to eclipse at once Catalani, Malibran, Sonntag, Jenny Lind, and Patti, the opera managers of Europe had hired one of the subatlantic telegraph cables, in order to test her voice by means of the newly-invented 'telephon.' A glimpse of a possible phonograph is also afforded in this curious little book, in sundry slips of paper on which the results of the singing of the distant cantatrice are being recorded; and the narrator describes the enthusiastic exclamation of a musical editor, as he watches one of the curves: 'Won't the connoisseurs be astonished when they see a tone like this!' The trial being satisfactory, an ovation of applause was sent to the singer 'by means of another telephon working in the opposite direction'; and the narrative closes so far as this projected invention is concerned. It may be of interest to watch if, within a few years, others of the scientific speculations of this Dutch prophet shall be fulfilled, such as 'heliocromes' or nature-coloured photographs; 'emergeiathacs' or storers of force; or the production of artificial light and heat for general instead of isolated use. The effort now being made to use the electric light for urban illumination is so far a step towards one of the novelties which this book pictures as being in store for us in the year 2071.

A SCOTTISH SABBATH.

A blue mist wraps the peaked mountain-tops,
And shrouds the valleys with a wreath'd cloud
Of dowy vapour, till the glorious sun
His might puts forth, and with his radiant light
Dispels the haze, and a bright stream of gold
Pours forth, and gildeth all the smiling morn.

'Cross the heath-lands to the neighbouring kirk,
Walk the farm-maiden and her stalwart swain;
She with her smooed hair, in modesty
Down-looking, as the neighbours slow pass by;
He reverent-speaking of the looked-for day—
Not distant now—when they their lives shall join
In sacred bonds.

Upon the western breeze
Is borne the fragrance of the wide-spread moors,
The pink-tipped gowan bends beneath their feet,
The harebells quiver, and the golden furze
Is thickly blossomed. See! they enter now—
That guileless pair—with all-becoming awe
(His bonnet doffed in silent reverence),
The old gray porch; and as come thronging in
The birds and peasants—equal each man here
Unto his neighbour, in this holy place—
Chime out the bells, upon the soft spring air,
Their clear-voiced summons to the House of God.

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THE CIVIL SERVICE.

WITHIN our recollection—indeed not many years ago—the securing of situations in government offices was very much a matter of political favour. Members of parliament were beset by their supporters to get sons into the Excise, the Post-office, and so on. The condition of affairs was certainly not so bad as it appears to be in the United States, where the Civil Service from top to bottom is little better than a system of political jobbery; but though not so bad, it was bad enough. There was hardly any examination as to qualification for office, and in all departments there was much laxity as regards the proper performance of duties. Little by little, in a manner scarcely observable, all this has been changed. The organisation of the British Civil Service through its several departments is the most complete in the world. It is the result of immense care and consideration on the part of statesmen working independently of party. Political leanings have now nothing to do with appointment to office. Ability and good character are alone considered. All who aspire to be servants of the Crown must pass through certain critical examinations, in which personal favour is unknown. Excellent, however, as the new system is, it is not without faults, as we shall have occasion to notice; but the faults are those of detail, and easily curable.

One reason, perhaps, why there should be any faults at all, consists in the headlong rush of unreflecting young persons towards the Civil Service. Wanting in a sense of independence, or afraid to trust to their individual exertions, hosts of lads sell themselves for life, as we may call it, to the public service. For the certainty of getting two or three hundred a year, they become drudges in a routine of daily toil for the best part of their existence. Possibly, a vast number are unfitted for acting an independent part, and so far there is nothing to complain of. At the same time it is quite obvious that from whatever cause, the supply of youths for the Civil Service is always so considerably

beyond the demand that the scale of remuneration is necessarily moderate. Let no one go into the Civil Service in the hope of being either highly paid or lightly worked. The Public is the hardest of all masters. Whatever might be the case formerly, there is now no such thing as idleness in any office under government. The drolleries of *Punch* on the subject might at one time be true to nature. They would not fit under the present high-pressure system.

To be sure, the hours of work in the public offices are not long; eight hours being the longest day, and six hours the shortest; but there is now crammed into these few hours such an amount of tedious, dull, uninteresting, and almost unchangeable work, as to leave all, save those who are possessed of the strongest constitutions, useless for any further exertions until a night's rest has renewed their failing energies and given them another day's lease of life. To shew that there is here no exaggeration, let us look behind the scenes of that most popular of all public departments, the General Post-office.

The Money Order Office is a fair specimen of the work which is daily performed at St Martin's-le-Grand; though the hardest worked of all the branches of the Post-office are the Savings-bank and Telegraph departments. In the Money Order Office there are about sixty clerks constantly employed—namely forty established clerks and twenty 'writers,' the last-named being a class of public servants about whom we shall presently offer some explanation. About forty of these clerks and writers are called 'examiners,' and their duty is to examine, check, correct, and certify the daily accounts of all the postmasters in the kingdom; and when we mention that each postmaster sends in to the chief office daily about seven separate accounts, all of which have to be carefully examined, checked, and compared with his consolidated cash account, some idea of the stupendous nature of the work done may be arrived at. Each examiner, on reaching the office in the morning, finds on his desk an oblong box, that contains his day's work, which has been

already sorted and arranged in alphabetical order by competent messengers. He will take perhaps for this day's work all the towns and villages which range between the letters A and C, with the exception of such large towns as Manchester and Liverpool, if any such should come within the range of his letters; for these are immense accounts in themselves, and form one examiner's work alone. As there are about seven accounts to each postmaster—namely the Money Order, Savings-bank, Insurance, Annuity, Telegraph, Dog and Gun License, and Stamp accounts—the examiner will have from seven to eight hundred accounts to add up, tick, correct, initial, and compare within the short space of six hours. This is no child's play, especially as many of the small country postmasters generally manage to have their affairs in a pretty pickle; and to a novice entering upon the work, *ten hours* are about the time it takes him to get through with it.

Quite recently, clerks of the new 'Lower Division' have been substituted for 'writers' in all branches of the Post-office. The latter, however, still continue to perform quite as important duties in other departments of the Civil Service. In another part of the Money Order branch, clerks are also engaged in examining and checking the accounts of the foreign and colonial postmasters, a work that involves an acquaintance with two foreign languages, French and German.

Such then is the kind of work done in our government departments, and as we think that we have sufficiently proved the position of a Civil Service clerk to be no sinecure (and there is very little, if any, difference between all the offices nowadays), we will proceed to give our readers an insight into the present organisation of the Service and the pay and status of its members.

There is no institution of greater importance in any civilised country than an honourable and incorruptible Civil Service. It includes, in this country, all who are engaged in the service of the state, with the exception of the naval and military professions, and is divided into many branches, of which the highest is that portion which is charged with the administration of the government—namely the cabinet ministers, each of whom is at the head of a great civil department.

The Civil Service of England, as a distinct organisation for the collection of the revenue, dates from the time of Charles II., which is also the reign in which we first hear of 'writers' in His Majesty's dockyards, these officers being mentioned in *Pepys's Diary*. The principal departments of the Civil Service are (1) The Treasury, or department of the government; (2) Foreign Office; (3) Home Office; (4) Admiralty; (5) Customs; (6) Inland Revenue (Somerset House); (7) War Office; (8) Education Office. Other smaller offices there are of lesser importance, such as the Board of Works, Board of Trade, Exchequer and Audit and Stationery Offices, &c., while the War Office includes within its fold the 'Horse Guards,' the Ordnance Office, the Army Clothing Depot, and other minor *bureaux*. The Treasury presides as a matter of course over all the other departments, and has in many respects a kind of autocratic authority. Those connected with this high and important administration make and unmake Civil

Servants, check the tendency to extravagance on the part of the spending departments, and keep a strict watch over the interior economy of the public offices. In fact the Lords of the Treasury enjoy almost unlimited sway, acknowledging no other authority save parliament and the Queen.

Within the last five-and-twenty years, however, another important office, which might be described as the 'factotum' of the Treasury, has arisen in our midst under the title of the Civil Service Commission. Originally instituted by parliament for the purpose of examining and reporting upon the fitness of candidates for the Civil Service, it has gradually extended its sphere of action, until it has almost become co-existent and co-equal with the Treasury.

The advice and opinion of the Civil Service Commissioners are sought by the Treasury in matters relating to the pay and status of Civil Servants of every grade, and no appointment is made until the Commissioners have granted to the candidate their 'certificate of qualification.' The entrance to the Civil Service is only through the Civil Service Commission, the business of which is conducted in a dingy-looking building in Cannon Row, Westminster, the front of which overlooks the Victoria Embankment and the river. Here it is that the necessary examinations take place for situations under the Crown, ranging from a Secretary of Legation down to the 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' in the public offices; for strange to say, the very coal-porters and scrubbing-women nowadays have to pass a Civil Service examination! This would appear to be making competition a *reductio ad absurdum*, and carrying matters to unwholesome extremes.

On several occasions lately, the Civil Service Commission has been literally besieged by hosts of eager applicants for certain situations in the public service, the most notable being that of the employment of young women in the Post-office. The Commissioners had inserted advertisements in the newspapers to the effect that applicants for the new situation of 'counterwoman' in the General Post-office were to attend at their office in Cannon Row on a certain day between ten and twelve A.M.; and when the morning arrived, the would-be 'counterwomen' arrived to the number of three thousand respectable females! Here was a state of things for which the Civil Service Commission was not at all prepared, as it was impossible for them to examine all. In fact they had to close the building; and those who were lucky enough to have got inside had their names placed on a list for examination on a future day. The street was crowded throughout its length, and the traffic was blocked for about two hours.

There are now what are called an 'Old' and a 'New' Civil Service. The former includes every member who was appointed before the 12th February 1876; and the latter, those who have entered since that date. This division of the Service into two parts was the result of the labours of a Royal Commission presided over by Dr Lyon Playfair, M.P. After receiving evidence from all classes of public servants, the Commissioners decided to recommend the introduction of a new system altogether, which will gradually supersede the old, and by which the Service will in future be divided into two distinct castes, to be styled the 'Upper' and 'Lower' divisions.

This new scheme of lower division clerks was intended to supersede what may be termed the 'writer' system; although the last Report of the Civil Service Commissioners, dated August 1877, states that 'writers' are now in greater demand in the public offices than before.

Let us compare the pay of the two Services, in order to see what is the future value of a berth under the Crown. The pay of a clerk in the old Civil Service began at about ninety pounds per annum, and rose annually by increments of ten pounds to two hundred and forty pounds in the third class; three hundred and eighty pounds in the second; and five hundred pounds in the first—the promotion from one class to another going regularly by seniority as vacancies occurred. This wage (which differed in some offices), the clerks found too small for them, and petitioned the Treasury for an increase, on account of the rise in the prices of the necessities of life. The only answer which they have received has been the introduction of a new class, which will in course of time supersede them.

The pay of the new Service (as recommended by Dr Playfair and his colleagues) is as follows: Clerks of the upper division, one hundred pounds, by triennial increments to four hundred pounds, with 'duty pay' up to two hundred pounds per annum attaching to situations involving the performance of superior duties. Men clerks of the lower division, eighty pounds, by a similar increase of fifteen pounds to two hundred pounds. (If the office be a seven hours' one, the minimum is ninety pounds, and the maximum two hundred and fifty.) Extra pay, not exceeding one hundred pounds per annum, is also attainable by lower division clerks whose duties involve the superintendence of other clerks. Boy clerks of the lower division, fourteen shillings per week, rising by one shilling per week annually so long as they are employed. In estimating the value of this new scale we should remember that the Civil Servant's pension is calculated at the rate of one-sixtieth part of his salary for each year that he has served, so that the difference in the two scales of payment will also create a proportionate difference in his pension. It will also take a young man twenty-four years to reach the maximum of this lower division. This is not a very dazzling incentive to those who seek a post under the Crown. Nevertheless, the examinations are always well attended, notwithstanding the fees which have to be paid, and which are forfeited if the candidate is rejected. The new system has given rise to a host of professional 'examiners,' who make it their business to stuff into the heads of intending candidates all the extra knowledge which is required to enable them to pass the examination, and which is seldom, if ever, required again during their official career.

It may here be noted that the government have hitherto refrained from carrying out the recommendations of the Royal Commission so far as they relate to the higher branches of the Service, in which promotions continue to be made, and salaries are paid in like manner as if the Order in question had never been issued. An attempt to alter this state of things has, however, been lately made in the Admiralty, where, in order to induce men, who are serving on the old system, to retire, extraordinarily liberal terms have been offered.

These are—*fifty pounds for every year's service, and a pension, which is in no case to be less than half the recipient's present pay.* It is to be hoped that this is the dawning of a better day for the Civil Service, though why such comparatively excellent terms are allowed to the Admiralty and not to the other offices from which many clerks have had to retire, is a problem which we confess ourselves unable to solve.

The examination for the upper division includes a long list of subjects, which comprise several languages and a thorough knowledge of mathematics; indeed everything that can only be attained by a university education. That for the lower division includes English, History, Geography, Book-keeping, Arithmetic, English Composition, Indexing, Precis, and other minor subjects; while the fees for each examination amount to about three pounds in the first case, and one pound in the second. In addition to this, there are now special examinations for outdoor officers of the Customs and assistants in the Excise. These are not very difficult; and the pay of the former commences at fifty-five pounds per annum with a neat uniform; and promotion is available up to the rank of Surveyor, the pay of which is about equal to that of an upper division clerk. An assistant of the Excise is allowed a permanent salary of sixty pounds per annum, and when he is on duty he receives two shillings per day more.

The other appointments in the Civil Service are 'writers' and 'messengers.' The former are supposed to be a temporary class of public servants, and they are in one sense, as their pay is regulated on an hourly scale (pence per hour), and they receive no pension, no matter how long or how faithfully they have served the Crown. The Admiralty and Customs possess this class of writers; but in the former office they are now 'established writers,' with a maximum of one hundred and sixty pounds, and this, though they perform the same duties as, and side by side with Old Service 'clerks' getting their four hundred pounds (and even in some cases six hundred pounds) a year! The writers engaged by the Civil Service Commissioners as 'copyists' only, were compelled to do the work of the clerks whose places they filled; and deeming this to be a breach of their contract, they made many unsuccessful attempts to gain an improvement in their pay and position. This has just been positively refused them, with the addition of a delicate hint to the effect that, if not satisfied, they can leave a service in which they have spent the best part of their working lives. Writers have to pass a strictly competitive examination, and are then placed on a 'register' for employment in any department where their services are required. Unlike the established clerks, they can resign if they find the work too difficult or too heavy for them; and on reporting themselves at the office of the Civil Service Commission, they are, if their conduct has been satisfactory, transferred to some other department. The pay of the writers is, however, nothing more than a miserable pittance, totally insufficient to keep and maintain them in a respectable position; and the government which provides so liberally for those who leave the service, might very well grant a small increase of pay to this extremely hard-worked class of our public servants. The messengers, on the contrary, are well paid, and

hold permanent appointments, entitling them to a pension and other privileges, many of them being far better off than the writers.

And now we will leave our readers to judge whether the public service of to-day is the Elysium which many persons imagine it to be. We have given them the simple facts of the case, and it will do no harm if it should happen to dispel from their minds any illusion which they may have cherished on the subject. Those who seek to serve the State must be fully prepared to enter upon the task with a firm hand, a clear head, and a courageous spirit, for they will have to do battle not only with hard work and divers adverse influences which it would not be politic to speak of in these pages, but with their own will, which is generally the hardest fight of all. Those who are not willing to do this; who are not willing to work incessantly during certain hours under the proviso that, if necessary, their whole time must be given to the State without extra pay; and those who are seeking for sinecures in an age of hard work and poor pay, had better look elsewhere for employment, for we can assure them, that of all the situations to which they may reasonably aspire, the one which is the least likely to fulfil their expectations is that of a clerk or writer in Her Majesty's Civil Service. We pity the hosts of lads who, from erroneous conceptions, the weak advice of friends, or the want of a self-reliant spirit, heedlessly seek a livelihood in the Civil Service, and for the sake of a poor rate of pay, sacrifice a life-long existence. At the same time, let us fully acknowledge that on the principle of supply exceeding demand, the Crown (that is to say, the tax-paying public) is quite entitled to benefit by the excess of applications.

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—ACCEPTED.

A BOOK, and not a dull one, might be compiled from existing anecdotes bearing on the one single subject of what, half a century ago, was known by the playful periphrasis of 'popping the question.' Poppings matrimonial have always been of the most various quality, some discharged, as it were, by the lightest touch to a hair-trigger, and others given to hang fire like some clumsy argu-buse of the middle ages. There have been proposals of marriage after an acquaintance of an hour's duration, and instances of prudent suitors who looked before leaping for so many years that the stealing on of age rendered any leap at all unnecessary. And out of the number of those who contrive to get married, the immense majority, if quite candid, would avow that they blundered into a proposal, rather than spoke their minds of set purpose and at a time deliberately selected.

'It's got to be done,' said Jasper, as he left the library, and with a young man's usual impatience when an irksome task is laid upon him, he told himself that there was no time like the present for the necessary interview with the object of his affections. He was a cool, hackneyed man of the little-great world of fashionable London, and as such was not likely to be troubled by

those tortures of shyness which afflict raw curates or callow sub-lieutenants. Yet, as he made his way towards the room wherein he expected to find her whom he sought, his step was slow, and his knitted brow and downcast eye gave token of unusual thoughtfulness. What was the key to the enigma, what the truth concerning this mystery, that had exercised Jasper's sharp but shallow wits ever since the day when he had dogged his father's footsteps to *The Traveller's Rest*, and played the eaves-dropper during the baronet's conversation with so very dubious an acquaintance as Richard Hold? Who was this girl, whom he had pledged himself to marry, yet of whom he knew absolutely nothing beyond the fact of her inexplicable influence over Sir Sykes, and that she had been received under the roof of her present guardian in compliance with the demand of such a man as Hold? What had Sir Sykes done, that he should have become the puppet and the victim of a ruffianly adventurer such as Hold, and what interest had the latter in pushing the fortunes of the baronet's ward?

Jasper was not very scrupulous. His opinion of women was so emphatically that they were not to be trusted, that he did not look for any very exalted ideal of feminine perfection in his future wife. If he cared for any one, it was for Lady Gladys De Vere, and he had sense enough to know that Lady Gladys neither liked him nor respected him. Not that he had taken to heart this humiliating lesson in a manner calculated to yield profit.

'It's because I'm broken down,' he had said to himself more than once; and he really did believe that had he still been in the full swim of metropolitan fashion and hair-apparent to Carbery Chase, Lady Gladys or any other virtuous and well-bred young lady would have regarded him as a big fish worth the catching, quite irrespective of his past history and personal faults. Now, he had offered to him an opportunity of feeling solid ground beneath his feet, of taking up a position whence no caprice could dislodge him, of becoming heir of entail to the fine estate so long coveted. The gift was saddled with an awkward condition, to be sure, but Jasper was ready to take any female hand that was weighted with such a dowry as that of the Devonshire estate.

As Captain Denzil had anticipated, Ruth Willis was in the morning-room that overlooked the rose-garden. She was not alone. His sister Blanche was with her. Something in Jasper's face, something in Jasper's manner, served to make Blanche, within five minutes of her brother's entrance, take up her lacework and glide quietly out of the room. Girls have a subtle instinct which enables them to divine when a man is going to make an offer of marriage to one of their company, and a sympathy with match-making which induces them, even to their own detriment, to lend a helping hand to the swain who comes a-wooing. Blanche Denzil was not excessively fond of the Indian orphan, and did not consider the alliance as one precisely suitable to her brother, yet some feminine freemasonry made her leave a clear stage for the suitor to tell his tale.

Ruth did not change colour or assume an air of self-consciousness, but sat quiet, plying her crochet-needle with perfect composure.

'I thought you were out, Captain Denzil,' she said coolly.

'No; I have been talking to my father, Miss Willis,' said Jasper, determining to make the plunge at once—'talking, by Jove, about you.'

'Of me? You did me very great honour then, Captain Denzil,' said Ruth, with a slightly scornful ring, as Jasper fancied, in her voice. 'Sir Sykes, however, is always kind.'

'He means to be kind,' said the ex-cavalry officer, smoothing out his moustache. 'You'll be mistress one day—I hope of course it won't be very soon—of Carbery Chase; and in the meantime—'

Ruth arched her eyebrows a very little, and Jasper came to a shamefaced stop in his discourse. It occurred to him for the first time that he had taken for granted both the proposal and the acceptance.

'Either you are mocking me'—Ruth began slowly, and with a malicious glitter in her elish eyes.

'No; by Jove! not for the world, Miss Willis,' protested Jasper.

'Or,' continued Ruth, 'you come as an ambassador, to communicate to me, as your words imply, a proposal of marriage on the part of your father.'

'No; but of myself—hang it, yes!' interrupted Jasper, with vexation in his tone and look. 'You are so hard on a fellow, Miss Willis; and—and I'm a little confused, and that. I only mean to say, I think I've shewn you pretty plainly, Miss Willis, how much I admired you; and now I've come to-day to ask you to make me the happiest of men by consenting to be my wife.'

(It was neatly put, though I say so—rather well rounded, 'pon my word it was,' Jasper said, between the puffs of his cigar, on the occasion of a visit which he paid to his old friend Captain Frodgers in the cavalry barracks of the county town; and indeed by that time he had come to look on the mode of his making the offer as rather a creditable performance than otherwise.)

'You speak seriously,' said Miss Willis, looking up, without a blush or tremor, in his face.

'Yes; I do,' returned the young man—'Ruth, dear Ruth!' And he took her hand, and tried to pass his arm around her slender waist. She snatched her hand to be taken, but the encircling arm she put aside.

'And you ask me to marry you—soon?' said Ruth, smiling; a strange smile it was, and made the stranger by the singular expression of the eyes. If ever eyes were fraught with an exultant yet self-restrained sense of power, they were those of Ruth Willis as she rose to her feet and confronted her suitor.

'Indeed, I do—my dearest wish,' stammered out Jasper.

'Then you shall have your dearest wish,' answered Ruth. 'You have made me a very flattering and generous offer, Captain Denzil; and I accept it, accept it in the same frank spirit as that in which it is made. You ask me to be your wife, and I answer, Yes.'

Having said this with no hesitation, no trace of weakness or emotion, and with that impish glitter

still visible in her dark eyes, the little lady quietly released her hand from that of Jasper, swept him a courtesy such as would not have disgraced the old Bourbon court of Versailles, and was gone from his sight and from the room before he had time to recover from the amazement which her singular behaviour caused him. Jasper was but half-pleased. He was as little in love as any fortune-hunter who had ever burned his mercenary incense before the shrine of a moneyed idol; but though the business of the hour had been shuffled through with business-like promptitude, he could not feel that his own part in it had been of a dignified character.

'Never mind,' he muttered, as he ramblod off to smoke by himself in the grounds; 'it all comes to the same thing in the long-run. There's no nonsense about her, at anyrate.' And then he fell to dreaming over his cigar, of the prospect of a return next season to London, and of all the brilliant prospects that a command of money such as he should now be able to borrow, would open out before him.

CHAPTER XL.—THE WALK BESIDE THE RIVER.

Again was Ruth Willis pacing to and fro beneath the trees, on the stony bank that overhung the swift but narrow river that brawled below on its short but noisy journey from lofty Dartmoor to the sea. The spot, as has been mentioned, was a favourite one with the Indian orphan. Thither it was that she had repaired months before to read the stolen letter snatched from Sir Sykes's library table, and thither she went again on the afternoon of the day, the morning of which had witnessed Jasper's proposal and her own acceptance of it.

Time and the Seasons—which are Time's handmaids, and do their work diligently each in her allotted grooves—had not been idle since that earlier day when Ruth, like a caged tigress, had stalked to and fro upon the bank, scarce heedful of the brawling of the clamorous water below, the stolen letter firmly clasped in her small hand. Then the rustling greenery of the thick leaves overhead had interposed a screen between her and the hot summer sun. Now the pale yellow beams glinted on bare stems, and boughs from which the red and russet leaves were falling fast.

'I am the first,' said Ruth to herself, as, by a quick glance, she perceived that she was the only occupant of that lonely nook. 'He will not fail me, though.'

And indeed she had not taken more than half-a-dozen turns before the cracking of dead sticks and the snapping of twig and brushwood announced that somebody was bursting rudely through the ornamental belt of woodland; and through the parting boughs appeared the bronzed countenance and stalwart form of Richard Hold.

'The booby has spoken, has he?' said Hold, after one glance at his sister, as he stood, dusty and panting, in the path.

'How do you know that?' asked Ruth tartly.

'I read it in your face,' answered the man, passing the bank of his broad mind across his heated brow. 'Besides, he was bound to speak. Money will do it, money! What won't it do? Answer me that! For the fear of losing it or the hope of winning it, how men will creep and wriggle

and grovel in the dust, and fawn and whimper and whine!

'You have been drinking, brother!' said Ruth in reproachful accents.

'Drinking? I always have. How's a man to kill time and get on from one thing to another without drinking? If one didn't drink, how do you suppose, my lass, a man could live?' demanded Hold, in the aggrieved tone of one who feels that the fundamental principles of his belief are being called in question.

'We women don't do it,' answered Ruth, pursing up her lips.

'You don't, Missy, and it's well you don't,' rejoined Richard good-humouredly. 'If ever, in the newfangled days they say are coming, you have to use your brains as we use ours, perhaps you'll learn the way to the bottle too. I'm none the worse, though, for what I took before I left *The Rest*. Now spin your yarn, my girl, and I'll lend it the best attention I can muster.'

'Well, Dick,' said Ruth, sidling up to him, 'your guess, in the first place, was correct. Captain Denzil did come to me and ask me to be his wife.'

'And you didn't say No!' replied Hold with a nod and a chuckle.

'I said Yes,' returned Ruth; 'but I said it with such scorn, with such flippant, cold indifference of voice and action, that if the man had had a drop of manly blood in his veins, a spark of manly feeling in his heart, he would have flung back the hand I permitted him to take, and plucked away his neck from the gilded yoke to which, in his greed and laziness, he had bowed it. He resented my treatment, as I could see, but he had not the honesty to shew it. How I despise him! How, if we come to be married, I shall learn to hate him!'

'There's no doubt about the marrying, is there?' asked Hold anxiously.

'There is always a chance, brother, in a case of this sort, that Fate or Death may forbid the banns!' returned Ruth. 'But so far as promises go, the bird is springed already.'

'I made pretty sure of that,' observed the seaman, pushing back the dark grizzled hair that protruded from under his felt hat. 'My last letter to Sir Sykes, sent over from *The Traveller's Rest* but yesterday, called a spade a spade, I reckon.'

'Sometimes it answers better,' said Ruth coldly, 'to call it an agricultural implement. You are too headstrong, Brother Dick, and should remember the old adage about the iron hand in the velvet glove.'

'I never heard it,' was Dick's blunt rejoinder, 'and shouldn't have valued it the snapping of a gun-flint if I had. Book-learning don't count for much with me, Missy. And that's odd too, considering where I was raised; but after all a pastry-cook's prentice has no appetite for tarts. Well! my hand can grip pretty strongly; but I don't muffle it up in gloves of any sort, kid or velvet. And it is because I've squeezed Sir Sykes Denzil, Baronet, as smartly as I have, that you have had Young Hopeful at your feet to-day.'

'And now,' said Ruth pleasantly, and adapting her metaphor—as it was her wont to do when desirous to conciliate her formidable ally—to the seaman's calling—'now that we are coming into port with a fair wind and a full sail, would it not

be foolish to yaw the ship out of her course into shoal-water, Dick?'

'You're a smooth-spoken one, Missy!' rejoined Hold, with a sort of admiration expressed in the ring of his gruff voice; 'and deserve to be a lady, and to wear silks and satins, and eat off gold, and ride in a grand carriage; never a doubt of that! But I've set my heart, my dear, on helping you to your rights, and I'll not rest until you have them, or my name's not Dick.'

'You mean—as to the name?' said Ruth quickly.

'I do mean as to the name,' stubbornly rejoined Richard. 'Why on earth should you be married as Ruth Willis, when you could be "my Lady" from the first?'

Ruth shook her head, and somewhat of a cloud came over her dark intelligent features.

'A barren title, I have felt from the beginning, could avail us little,' she said softly. 'Carbery Chase and the fat acres represented a prize worth the winning; and remember I shall be called Lady Denzil when Sir Sykes dies.'

'You shall be culled by a finer word than that on your wedding day,' persisted Dick obstinately. 'I want to make them stare, those quality folks, who eye an honest sailor as though he were an escaped galley-slave. I want to strip that dandy lord of his borrowed plumes; though, after all, he's not so bad a chap, by a sight, as either of the Denzils, young or old. And I want the top of a bridegroom—ha, ha! a pretty life you'll lead him once the knot is tied!—want him to feel himself, as he will be, as the dirt under your feet compared with such a lady as you'll be.'

'Now, brother,' said Ruth in persuasive accents, and laying her hand as she spoke with a light touch on the mariner's arm, 'you know well enough that in affairs of real difficulty I come to you to pilot me clear of the dangers in my track. This affair of the title is, in comparison with the solid advantages already secured, a small matter. Don't let us jeopardise our winnings merely to gratify a whim!—'

'No; but to drive the nail home and clench it!' interrupted Hold, striking his closed fist heavily into the open palm of the other hand. 'Dainty, well-educated bit of a thing as you are, I know these people you live among better than you do yourself, and I know that it doesn't do to be mealy-mouthed in dealing with them. What has brought old Stiffback—old Sir Arrogant—to his senses, but the gentle reminder I gave him that it rested with me to make him exchange his luxurious home for— Never mind what! I'll make him swallow yet another of the bitter pills I keep in store for him, and own you for what you are—a lady in your own right!—'

'Dick, Dick! something whispers to me that harm will come of this, that your rashness will spring the mine, and blow us and our schemes into the air. Wait till after the wedding. Wait till I am safe!' pleaded Ruth; but she pleaded in vain. Hold laughed at her fears.

'Hark ye, my lass,' he said in his gruff tones. 'Once we were chased—never mind why—by a Queen's ship, and our only chance of escape lay in going through a channel marked in the charts as doubly dangerous. The gap was so narrow you might have tossed a biscuit on to the reef either side. Ahead, the water foamed and seethed

on sandbank and sunken rock, and astern was the enemy, doing his best with his long gun to cripple our spars. Twice, as I handled the schooner, I heard the grating of her keel on the stones below, while down rattled boom and yard, shot away by the pursuer. Should we strike and fill, the stoutest swimmer had small chance to gain the shore, the water was so alive with sharks. And my mates lost heart, and "Give in, Dick," says one, and "Give in, cap'en," says another. What they wanted was to back topsails, lay to, and wait till Her Majesty's gunboat overhauled us, rather than keep our course in that perilous thread of water!

'Well!' said Ruth, as the man panted for breath. She was interested, in spite of herself, in the wild tale, irrelevant as she deemed it to the business in hand.

'Well,' rejoined Richard forcibly, 'I was of another sort of stuff, I guess—no white spots about my heart—and I cracked on, carried the schooner through places where the mau-of-war didn't dare to follow, and got off by the skin of my teeth, it's true; but then, as often, a miss proved as good as a mile. That was the time they first put upon me the name of Devil-dick.'

'You are a bold fellow. Nobody doubts it!' said Ruth, looking in her turn with involuntary and as it were extorted admiration at the bronzed countenance of the narrator, now all aglow with a pride perhaps not wholly unjustifiable. A bad man was Richard Hold. He had ugly memories to plague him in his sober moments, and was now a hardened Ishmaelite, whose hand had been against the hands of all men for many a sinful year; but he had some good points. It was not difficult to fancy a state of things in which his reckless courage might have won him the laurels of a rugged hero.

'Men don't often question my grit, anyhow,' answered Hold grimly. 'I just told you the story of how we shewed a clean pair of heels to H.M.'s gunboat *Stinger*, because I wished you to see, Missy, that I like to be commander of my own craft. What do I care for pompous old Sir Sykes? I've angered in my time those whose black looks boded worse than his could do. He'll have to grin and bear it.'

Ruth was but ill-pleased. She had learned, however, by experience that beyond a certain point Richard Hold could not safely be thwarted, and that, with a considerable share of practical shrewdness, there was in him a dash of that stubborn savagery which prompts the bleeding bull of the Spanish arena to stoop his shaggy neck and rush, through flaring fireworks and fluttering flags, full at the mounted lancers.

'You won't at anyrate speak to-day, Dick?' she said, looking up into his face.

'No; I'll give them that much grace,' returned Hold, with one of his hard laughs. 'To-morrow I'll teach them to dance to a new tune.'

This, Ruth felt, was something gained. She might then break the bad news to Sir Sykes, tutor him to play his part, soften the stroke which she could not quite avert. She had lived long enough at Carbery Chase to appreciate the horror with which well-bred people endure 'a scene.' There was no help for it now; the scene must be made. But by a little timely tact its effects might be rendered less intensely disagreeable.

'Think it over again, brother!' said Ruth at parting. 'I wish you saw, as I do, that quiet ways succeed the best.'

'But for me, Missy, you'd not be here,' answered Hold shortly. 'Well, good-night!'

And so they parted.

(To be continued.)

SEA-MATS.

VISITORS to the sea-side must frequently have observed certain peculiar organisms, looking like pieces of pale-brown sea-weed, lying amongst the *débris* which the boisterous waves have tossed upon the land. Collectors of sea-weeds place these organisms in their herbaria, and puzzle themselves to find 'a local habitation and a name' for such unknown species of sea-plants; and scientific friends are ultimately applied to for the correct designation of the plants. That they are plants there appears to be no reasonable doubt. They resemble sea-weeds in the first place, and in the next, they grow rooted and fixed to oyster-shells and stones. Better proof that the pale-brown things of the sea-beach are sea-weeds could not be required. Imagine the surprise of the non-technical collector, however, when the scientific friend remarks upon the futility of attempting to classify the unknown organisms with sea-weeds. He further astonishes us when he informs us that the supposed sea-weeds are veritable animals of no mean degree of organisation. Each piece of 'sea-weed' is in fact a colony of minute beings, bound together by the closest ties of relationship. Incredible as the naturalist's assertion may seem it is capable of being speedily proved. When a fragment of the supposed sea-weed is placed under a microscope of moderate power, or even when it is surveyed through a hand-lens, we behold numerous little 'cells' or spaces of oval shape. The whole organism in fact seems to be composed of these cells, which are packed thickly together on both sides of the sea-weed-like structure. No sea-weed proper presents such an aspect, and the old maxim that 'appearances are deceptive' is here illustrated anew.

Suppose, however, that we obtain a fragment of one of these curious plant-like structures in a living state. If we then place it under a good microscope, we shall have not only proof positive of its animal nature, but we shall also be startled and delighted by the scene which the wonder-glass opens to our view. We may note the little cells as before, but we can also see that each cell contains a little tenant, voluntarily imprisoned within the narrow limits of its home. As we continue our watch we see currents of particles sweeping in and out of the cells. A moment later, and from the apertures of some of the cells little heads are thrust out; each head being surrounded by a crown of tentacles or feelers richly provided with little vibratile processes named *cilia*. As these feelers wave backwards and forwards in the water we can readily acquire the idea that they may serve for breathing as well as for sweeping food-particles into the mouth. All is activity in the little colony before us. Heads pop out and in with ceaseless movement, and we could fancy that were our sense of hearing magnified, we should be deafened with the roar of the

busy life that prevails in the miniature world below our gaze.

Such is a brief description of a sight familiar enough to the microscopic observer. It leaves no doubt upon our mind that the supposed seaweed is a true animal in every sense. And if we apply to the naturalist we shall be told that such organisms tossed up by the waves on the beach are named *Flustres* or 'Sea-mats,' and that they may in popular language be named 'zoo-phytes'—a term expressive of their striking resemblance to plants.

The interest which attaches to these curious beings, may warrant a further investigation into their nature and constitution. We have already named them a 'colony' of animals, so that we awaken to the idea that animals may exist in a 'compound' state. Each little member of this colony, however, is essentially distinct from its neighbours, and is connected to them merely by the community of the outer horny covering of the cells, which remains as the 'Sea-mat' when all else has perished after the zoophytes' home has been thrown up on the shore. Each cell, however, exactly resembles its neighbours in all essential particulars; so that if we gain an idea of the structure of one cell and its tenant, we shall have acquired a knowledge of the whole colony of cells which, in defiance of all written and unwritten statutes against overcrowding, are clustered so thickly on both sides of the flat sea-weed-like structure. Beginning with the outside of the cell, we find that portion of the being to be of horny consistence. There is nothing special to note about the external wall of the dwelling-place, save to observe that one usually finds thereupon certain minute parasitic beings known as 'birds'-head processes.' These latter possess jaws, which snap continually; their movements persisting after the death of the little tenant of the cell. What these 'processes' are, naturalists cannot definitely say. Star-fishes and sea-urchins bear organisms of allied nature on their skin and shells; but whether they are parasitic lodgers, or whether they are modified members of the colony as has been suggested, time and further research alone can shew. The cell has an aperture through which, as we have already seen, the head and tentacles can be protruded. Inside, it is lined by a very delicate membrane which has been called the 'endocyst,' and this membrane is attached to the base of the tentacles, the movements of which may be further glanced at.

Motion in the animal world is usually accomplished by means of muscles. The movements of the little sea-mat colonist are muscular in their nature, and skilful research has shewn us that a special set of muscles exists for the purpose of turning out the tentacles, whilst another set is developed for pulling them in again. When the tentacles are withdrawn into the cell, the action resembles that by which the finger of a glove is pushed in upon itself, or that by which a night-cap is doubled in order to fit the head. This is what is scientifically known as 'invagination.' And it follows that when the tentacles are protruded they are simply extended from the fold into which they had previously been pushed.

The internal furnishings of this little house are of a tolerably complete kind. The mouth is the

entrance to a digestive system of complete character in which food is assimilated; and although no heart exists, yet we know that a continual circulation of the fluid contained within the cell is kept up by means of the little *cilia* or filaments which line it. Near the mouth the microscopist detects a large mass of nervous matter from which nerve-filaments radiate to surrounding parts; and we thus find that each little member of the colony possesses means for directing and governing the actions of its humble existence. The questions may now be asked, how has this curious colony of animals grown? and how comes it to exist in the similitude of a plant? These are very important queries, inasmuch as they enable us to gain a correct idea of the individuality of animals, and also determine for us some curious features of animal life. We shall find a clue to the answers of these questions if we reflect that the tenant of each little cell has the power of producing eggs from which new colonies may spring. It is well to remember, however, how each colony grows. Like the tree, the sea-mat colony exhibits a process of continual waste. As the leaves of the tree wither and fall, so the little members of the colony die, and so the cells perish. But just as the tree produces new buds from which fresh leaves will arise, so also the sea-mat colony repairs its loss by budding, and thus mimics the plant more closely than in the assumption of a sea-weed-like form. A process of budding, then, is seen to repair the ordinary losses and mortality of the sea-mat. A like process of budding may be shewn to inaugurate its life, and to produce its characteristic shape and appearance. For in due time each little cell will produce its eggs; and such of these latter as meet with a kindly fate and undergo a process of development, will ultimately appear each as a little body, at first swimming freely in the surrounding water, and then settling down to form a single primitive cell. Like an ambitious emigrant from a mother-country, this single cell and its tenant aspires to become the founder of a colony. Soon it throws out little processes of its substance, which remain connected to it, and in due time develop into cells like itself. These new cells in their turn develop buds, and through the work of each successive generation of buds and cells, the sea-mat colony is once again produced.

There is another mode in which new colonies of these and allied animals may be developed; this latter process having been studied chiefly in certain fresh-water relations of the sea-mats. Certain peculiar little bodies resembling in shape two watch-glasses placed face to face, and inclosing living matter between them, are sometimes to be found within the cells growing upon a cord-like structure attached to the digestive system of the little tenant. These bodies are named 'winter-eggs,' because they appear to be produced in the winter season, and to be liberated by the decay of the parent-cells in the spring. When they are liberated, each winter-egg escapes into the surrounding water, and when its protecting 'watch-glasses' unclose, a young organism escapes therefrom. This little being settles down, develops all the characters of a single cell and its tenant, and in due season and by the process of budding develops a colony like to that from which it sprang. The 'winter-eggs' are regarded by natu-

realists merely as 'buds' which are produced internally, and which are destined to lay the foundations of new colonies, as we have seen.

The history of the sea-mats affords some valuable hints regarding the personality of animals. The higher animals are invariably single and simple beings, and are thus named 'individuals.' No doubt exists that a horse, a dog, and a bird are 'individual' animals in every sense of the term. So also is a whelk, an oyster, a worm, and a sea-anemone. What relationship can the ordinary animal be shown to possess with the compound colony represented by the sea-mat? We may say that the true individual is the result of the full and complete development of *one* germ or egg. Does the sea-mat colony then arise from one germ, it may be asked? Undoubtedly, is the reply to this question; for the beginning of the colony was seen to exist in the single little cell developed from a germ. Thus the whole sea-mat with its hundreds or thousands of members is strictly comparable with the single higher animal. And the philosophy of zoology bids us regard the members of the colony merely as so many similar 'units' which make up a single personality and an individual whole. This latter thought is by no means the least curious suggested by a stray organism thrown by chance across our paths in a sea-side stroll.

THE DOUBLE PICTURE.

VISITORS to Madrid at the present moment may view a picture, or rather a double picture, which as a work of art equals anything the great painter Murillo ever executed, and at the same time conveys to the mind food for reflection of no ordinary character. Where the picture has been hidden for so many years, I am unable to state; but to my wondering gaze it was exhibited a few months ago at the private residence of the descendants of the family in whose palace the incidents occurred which are here about to be related. The gilding of the picture-frame has long since disappeared, but on the canvas the portrait of a beautiful lady, life-size, is painted. She is young, just budding into womanhood, dressed in the gorgeous Spanish style of the seventeenth century. No one can doubt her beauty, her wealth, or her high station. She is just stretching forth her hand to greet a visitor, and words of kindness appear to be coming from her half-opened lips. The countenance expresses perfect happiness, and suggests that care or disappointment has never assailed that pure creature. A notice in Spanish tacked to the frame tells the spectator to 'turn the picture.' Appliances are made easy for the latter purpose; and then the spectator sees painted on the reverse side a vault, a coffin, and a pale face with the lines of death upon it. There are clouds above this, yet they seem to be breaking away, and shining vistas of a better world appear; whilst here and there angels' faces, full of love and joy, peep through the slight openings, as if beckoning the spirit aloft. The features of the dead are evidently identical with those of the lady on the obverse. But everything on the lower part of the reverse side of the canvas denotes decay. The mouldering coffins, the damp stony walls, with flickering torches around, would indeed be horrible to gaze upon, were it not for the brighter spectacle above.

I longed to know the history of this wonderful double picture; and my Spanish guide collected the following facts, which he gathered partly from manuscripts and partly from the De Villamanrique family.

Philip IV. of Spain kept up a grand royal court at Madrid early in the seventeenth century. Olivarez, who was the Prime-minister and favourite of the king, greatly patronised the fine arts, and welcomed men of genius to his palace, accepting them as his guests. About 1620, Velasquez, though born in Seville, visited Madrid, and painted so faithfully the portrait of the Minister, that Philip sat for his own portrait, and appointed Velasquez the court painter. Prince Charles, afterwards Charles I. of England, sat to the same artist, who now claimed friendship with all the nobles of the court. About 1625, Rubens was sent on a political mission to Spain, and became closely associated with Velasquez; and in such esteem were the two great painters held, that they were invited to all the royal banquets, and the highest nobles in the land desired to do them honour. A few years later, Murillo, who also was born at Seville, came with letters of introduction to Velasquez, and was accepted in the same society as his brother-painters. Amongst the nobility of that period was the Count de Villamanrique, who gave the largest and most select entertainments; and young Murillo, who was a brilliant scholar and of distinguished birth, attracted his special attention. Murillo was but a comparative youth when he completed his first great picture illustrative of the Life of Joseph. His patron Count de Villamanrique (for whom it was painted) wished to exhibit this as a work of art to his friends.

A new picture, of merit, was in Madrid at that period an idol; it served as food for conversation whether by persons of genius or by those who quoted others' opinions; more than this, it was frequently the medium of bringing together the aristocrats of the period, and served as an excuse for social gatherings. The young painter's new picture was to be exhibited at Villamanrique's palace, and all the nobles in Madrid were invited to view it. On the day of the exhibition the streets were crowded with carriages containing persons of the highest rank, including the Prime-ministry, all wending their way to Count Villamanrique's mansion, which was lighted up in the fullest gala character of the age. The rooms were soon filled with youth and beauty as well as with age and genius. The banquetting-room, the ball-room, and even the approaches, were brilliantly illuminated; the nobles and ladies, bedecked in rich velvets and jewels, flitted from one room to another, or formed themselves into circles for conversation until music burst forth, and there was a rush to the dancing-room. Amongst all the grace and beauty of that assembly none attracted so much interest as Catalina, the Count's daughter and heiress to the estates of Villamanrique. Her large liquid eyes had an expression peculiarly charming in a Spanish lady; her complexion was clear and bright; and her black hair curling luxuriantly down her shoulders, made her the personification of a Spanish belle.

As to the picture, at intervals persons would come again and again into the banquetting-hall, where it was placed, and gaze with rapt atten-

tion upon it. But the painter heard not the praises lavished upon himself or his work; one object alone attracted his attention, and that was the beautiful Catalina. They are now together; for among the gay cavaliers and proud nobles assembled at Villamanrique palace that evening, none excelled the young painter in grace and eloquence, whilst his handsome countenance beamed with honest pleasure; and as he and Catalina joined in the dance or walked together side by side, every eye seemed bent in admiration of the young couple; and even the Count smiled approval, as he had a great regard for Murillo, and considered him quite his daughter's equal; indeed the matter appeared to be settled that same evening in the minds of all present that the young people were made for each other.

The youthful painter returned to his rooms that night, or rather early morning, in a transport of delight never experienced before. This was followed by days and months of happiness; for he was invited to take up his abode in Count Villamanrique's palace, and every day he saw his lady-love, and every day he painted as he had never painted before. The canvas seemed to glow with life beneath his hand; and the proudest work he was executing was the portrait of his lovely Catalina; but this for the present was to be kept a secret. Murillo was accounted the happiest man in all Madrid. No assembly was complete without him; and his joyful laugh and his merry wit always attracted general attention. At length the betrothal was an understood affair; and Murillo went to tell his friends the joyful tidings at Seville, and invite some of them to be present at the ceremony. It was evening when he returned to Madrid. He saw Catalina enter the cathedral, watched her as she dipped her finger in the consecrated water and as she knelt in silent prayer amid the worshipping throng. The young man knelt reverently by her side until the vesper service was concluded, when she rose with a dejected air, to depart; but scarcely had she quitted the church when Murillo gently touched the maiden, who turned her head quickly and greeted him with surprise and joy. 'Welcome back, Esteban!' (he was named Esteban Bartolomeo Murillo) she said; 'welcome back to Madrid!'

'Your devotion should indeed bring down a blessing, for never was such a devotee. I knelt beside you all through the service, and yet you deigned not to give me one single glance.'

Catalina laughingly rejoined: 'Well, I shall no longer need the offices of my servant;' and turning to the old man who was following her with the kneeling-cushion and the book of prayer, said: 'You can go home now, good Bartolo; and tell the Count that his daughter is in safe hands.'

The young couple walked along as lovers should do, happy in each other's society; but somehow the painter saw a shade of sadness on the maiden's face, which he attributed to religious zeal, from which he tried to rouse her. 'I have a favour to ask of you to-morrow,' he said.

She quickly replied: 'I will grant it before it is asked. At what time shall I see you in the morning?'

'The first favour that I ask,' responded Murillo, 'is that you will pay a visit to my studio as early as you conveniently can before the day advances.'

'I will be there by eight o'clock,' she replied.

It was a beautiful summer morning, and the sweet breath of the early day came floating into the studio, whilst the painter stood looking vacantly at an unfinished picture on the easel. How far he had got into dreamland or what he was meditating upon, it is impossible to divine, but the rustle of garments roused him from his reverie, when he met the sad and tearful gaze of Catalina. She had glided noiselessly into the room, and looking over Murillo's shoulder, had discovered that the canvas before him contained an outline of her own portrait.

The painter seized her hand and put it to his lips, saying: 'Why so sad, fair lady? I will paint you as a Magdalen bathed in tears. You have granted my first favour in coming here. The next favour I am going to ask you is to sit for two or three succeeding days, that I may make a perfect picture of you; making it something like the original, but never so beautiful.'

The maiden wept; and Murillo entreated her to walk in the garden, to shake off the melancholy. 'O my Esteban!' she exclaimed, 'I feel that I am yours for ever. But length of happiness may not be allowed us on earth. A time is coming, I know only too well, when we must part, for I have not long to live. I do not fear to die; but would that we had never met—not for my sake, but for yours.'

He gazed upon her with an awe-stricken expression. 'Die, my beloved!' he said; 'you are jesting. Your cheek glows with health, your constitution is strong, and I look forward to many years of happiness we may enjoy together.'

'I would I could think so, Esteban; but God in his wisdom has decreed otherwise.'

Murillo cheered the maiden, and her fears seemed to lessen; she became more cheerful, and sat for her portrait. Days passed away in sweet communion with each other; she became even gay and apparently happy; and the last day of sitting for the portrait arrived. The picture, nearly completed, was to be exhibited before the wedding. Catalina was early in the studio, and putting her hand on the painter's shoulder and looking him full in the face with mournful eyes, she said: 'Esteban, I have one request to make of you. I have granted your favour; now do me this one last favour that I ask of you. It will be difficult to perform, I know, but I have thought deeply of it. I feel that you are wishful to do good; that you are generous and faithful. I wish you to do one act which will lead you to think of me in heaven. I do not want to die without doing some good; and that which I ask you to do may perhaps teach the vain and frivolous a lesson, and lead them to better and more holy thoughts.'

Murillo was tortured by these allusions to death; but promised he would to the best of his power fulfil her request, however difficult it might be to accomplish.

'I fear my request is far more difficult than you imagine, and yet my heart tells me that I am right in making it,' said Catalina.

Again and again the young lover solemnly promised that whatever her request might be, it should be done according to her wish.

'Then,' said Catalina in a low tone, but with solemn earnestness, 'I wish that this picture may

be exhibited in the most public place in Madrid, that all may see it. And one month after my death I would have you go down into the tomb and paint me as I then am, on the reverse of the canvas. All will read the moral: one day possessed of all that makes life enviable—and the next behold the poor mortal remains!’

The painter shuddered in anguish at the bare thought, and as if to stop any further remarks on such a subject, exclaimed: ‘O Catalina! why should you allow such a melancholy thought to take possession of your mind? Why should you desire the happiness for which you were born?’

‘Esteban, Esteban!’ said Catalina, ‘do not be deceived. I know, not only from spiritual whisperings, but from an inward sinking, that my end draws very near; and even my own physician shook his head when I told him the symptoms of disease. I did wish to live, but God has willed it otherwise. His ways are not our ways, and yet they work together for good to those who love Him and the blessed saints in heaven. Now, Esteban, think of the good such a moral teaching as I suggest may do to perhaps thousands of persons who never think of death. But—and her voice faltered, tears coursing down her cheeks—‘if the performance of your promise will make you miserable—will give you pain—then abandon it. Forget that you have promised—forget that I have made the request.’

‘My Catalina,’ replied the painter; ‘if you should die in youth—which God and the Holy Virgin forbid—I will remember all that you have said. Your request shall be carried out to the very letter. Let us, however, forget the dreary anticipations, and think only of the present—of your grace and beauty, and how I can best put these on the canvas. You must look your best and your sweetest whilst I finish the picture; and all Madrid shall gaze with delight on your glorious countenance.’

The picture was finished; and all the nobles assembled at Villamanrique palace to view Murillo's portrait of his betrothed. It was then placed in the public square at Madrid; and crowds came to gaze upon the portrait of the beautiful girl. The greater portion of the female sex were heard to envy her beauty, her wealth, and her high position; but not a few lamented that they had not the happy lot of Catalina.

The palace of Villamanrique is again thrown open, but not for feasting or pleasure; the nobles are there, also the Prime-minister, and a representative of the sovereign; but the walls are hung with black; the low solemn chant of the Miserere is swelling and dying mournfully away amid the vaulted chambers. The pride of the house, the father's darling, the mother's pride, and the lover's idol, is dead; her mortal remains are now before the altar of the chapel, and the mourners are many. The sorrow of the household is great; but the soul of the painter is charged with an overwhelming flood of grief. All energy, all ambition, seemed dead within him. Ere the coffin was closed, he took a last look at his betrothed, who seemed as if a calm sleep had fallen upon her, and smiling even whilst she slept. ‘Beautiful! beautiful! even in death!’ he exclaimed, and then shut himself up in the studio, too agitated to take part in the funeral ceremony.

With all the solemn pomp that wealth could command, Catalina was buried in the tomb of her ancestors; and many a fervent prayer was breathed for the repose of her pure soul.

Murillo remained like one demented for a whole month; he would neither see nor be seen by any one. Dust gathered undisturbed over his pictures, and spiders had hung their webs over draperies. Not a sound, not a breath, disturbed the strange stillness of the painter's studio. It was noon, and the April sun tried to throw its brightness through the dull windows, when words of comfort that the lost one had spoken to him appeared to come to his mind soothingly, as though breathed by a spirit's voice. Suddenly he roused himself from his lethargy, and peered up and down the room. A blighting thought had smitten his brain: *the month had passed* and his promise was unfulfilled. Could he perform it? Could he gaze on the face and form he had so dearly loved, now mouldering in the grave? Was it possible to do this and live? ‘Yes; it must be done,’ he cried; ‘and if death comes in the performance, it will be welcome.—Yes, Catalina, your promise shall be fulfilled.’ He clasped his hands, and every nerve trembled as he strode through the palace into the library, where hung the picture of Catalina. He returned with it to the studio, and ordered wine, to brace himself for the effort. Then he turned the picture, and prepared the canvas for further operations.

It was night; and he called for some of the servants to bring torches and convey him to the tomb. ‘Proceed,’ he said, ‘and I will follow!’

The servants did his bidding, and Murillo strode firmly on. His lips were compressed, and his face very pale. He looked like a man carved in stone, but suddenly inspired with life. Kneeling for a moment in the chapel, he descended into the vaults beneath. The servants placed the picture before him, fastened their torches to the wall, and left him alone—alone with the dead! Suddenly he felt that his Catalina was no longer dead, but living in a higher and better sphere, and was even then smiling upon him. This feeling dispelled all fear. He calmly approached the coffin, removed the lid, and gazed with fond remembrance on those human remains; then seizing his brushes, commenced his work. All through that long night he worked on as if inspired. The servants relieved guard in the chapel adjoining, and occasionally brought him wine, of which he very temperately partook. The morning came at last; the picture was finished, but the painter lay upon the cold floor motionless and still. With tender care the servants raised him in their arms, and bore him to the light and air. A doctor was hastily sent for; and gradually the pulse was brought into action. He opened his eyes, but their expression was dreamy and vacant; he knew not any he saw around him, but murmured incoherently of the past. The excitement he had gone through was too much for his weak frame, and a burning fever laid him low for many weeks. But he recovered; and his first inquiry was for the picture, which he demanded should be exhibited in the public square in Madrid, as it had formerly been when there was only the one painting upon it.

Spanish documents incontestably show that for three weeks this Double Picture was thus publicly exhibited, and pious commentators on the subject say that ‘every one flocked to gaze upon Murillo's

wondrous picture. The effect was wonderful, and made a deep and lasting impression upon thousands of people. The gay and thoughtless came to see it oftentimes with ribald jests upon their lips, but turned from it silently and reflectively. The rich and mighty looked upon it with awe, reminding them that the impoverished body or the rich inheritance cannot retain their earthly dower when Providence wills otherwise; and one and all could see from that picture the end to which we all must come.

When Murillo recovered sufficiently, he left Madrid, and returned to his native city Seville, and there founded an Academy of Painting, and earned for himself an imperishable name. But he was a changed man from the day of his betrothed's death. His face was calm and mild, but a smile was rarely seen upon it; his sprightly conversation never again gladdened the royal city of Madrid, yet he could not leave this world without again visiting it and giving the last touch to the Double Picture.

Forty years had passed since the departure of Murillo from the palace of Villamanrique; the Count had gone the way of all flesh; a distant relative succeeded him in the estate, and he also had died, leaving a young successor, when one day a shrivelled old man, enveloped in a rich cloak, arrived at the mansion and desired to see the Count Villamanrique. The visitor was Murillo, who announced his name and his wishes in the same breath. 'All my old friends,' he said, 'are dead and gone; there is only one thing dear to me in this place now, and that is the Double Picture.'

'The appearance,' replied the young Count, 'of that picture was so saddening that we consigned it to the Tombs.'

'Well,' replied Murillo, 'I have come to make it pleasanter—one that you can look at without a feeling of horror. I have only a short time to live, and I want to shew the hope that is in me in that picture.'

The studio was made ready for the old painter, and the picture was reconveyed from the tomb to the palace. When he saw the picture, there was no sadness on his countenance, a smile was on his lips—a purified happy smile. He looked upwards, as if he already saw bright visions of another world, and his beloved waiting to welcome him on high. He seized his brushes; and on the clouds which veiled the upper part of the reverse picture he painted that heavenly vision already described, which appears to throw a radiance of a brighter world on the face of the corpse, and conveys to the mind of the spectator that her spirit is about to escape from its mortal coil into the realms of the blessed.

The old man looked upon his work; his smile grew brighter, and turning to his host, he said: 'Now my work is done. The picture is yours. It belongs to the Villamanrique family. No one can look at it with horror now. For forty years I have thought daily and nightly of that picture; and only now, when I am hoping soon to join my beloved in heaven, have I thought of depicting on canvas the moral lesson of life, that after death the pure in heart shall receive greater joys than any that earth affords.'

If this were a tale of fiction, it ought to be said

that the old man then bowed his head and died. But Murillo lived many months after his last touch to the double painting. His death was accelerated by falling from a scaffold whilst painting a picture in the Church of the Capuchins at Cadiz in the year 1682.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

HENCEFORTH, as arranged, the London University will grant degrees to women as well as to men, by which proceeding many questions which have been much debated of late years will be elucidated and perhaps settled. The intellectual capacity will be fairly tested; and, of equal importance, it will be decided whether females will take the time and trouble to perfect themselves for professional pursuits.

While this is going on at the West End, the City is preparing a scheme of education which is full of promise for all who have to get their living by work and are ignorant of the principles on which work is or ought to be established. This will consist in establishing a system of technical education such as London has not yet seen. In a Report which has been made public it is stated that the object of the promoters is 'the improvement of the technical knowledge of those engaged in the manufactures of this country, whether employed as workmen, managers, or foremen, or as principals.' This it is thought may be best accomplished by having a central institution in London, and trade schools in different parts of the country. At the centre, the course of study will comprise Applied Physics, Applied Chemistry, Applied Mechanics, and an Applied Art department. Besides this there will be a fund to 'endow exhibitions for meritorious students, to aid in equipping laboratories, and to provide apprenticeship premiums for promising boys, and prizes.' This liberal scheme is to be supported by contributions from the Companies to the amount of twenty thousand pounds a year; and we can but hope that it will be completely successful in awakening such a desire for knowledge of principles among handicraftsmen and their employers that they will not rest until they understand the reason why of everything connected with their handicraft. To see such a result would indeed be refreshing; and if we are to have a University of Manchester, there will be ample provision for technical education in the north as in the south. But to make success certain, the youth of the present day must cease to be unwilling to work with their hands, and to think that mechanical labour is ungentle. Advertise for a clerk at fifty pounds a year, and there will be a hundred applicants; advertise for a copper-plate engraver whose wages would be four pounds a week, and not one will appear in answer.

The phonograph and the telephone have been exhibited at meetings of the Royal Society, and with the satisfactory result that the sounds transmitted were in each case heard by large numbers of persons at the same time. Improvements have multiplied so rapidly that it is now no longer necessary that a single listener should monopolise the telephone. In one instance the mouth-piece of the instrument was subdivided and the number of

diaphragms increased with the effect of improving the distinctness and loudness of the sounds. But since then it has been proved that the diaphragm is not required—that speech and other sounds can be transmitted without the vibrating plate, and in fact with better results in some respects.

The statements circulated concerning the phonograph, that it reproduces the very tones of the voice spoken into it, are not strictly true. The reproduction, as we had occasion to remark in last 'Month,' is in fact a ghost-like sound approaching to a croak. Certain sounds, such as *s, z, th, wh,* are very imperfectly uttered; vowels on the contrary come forth distinctly; for which reason the phonograph succeeds better with Italian than any other language.

But most remarkable among these sound-conveying instruments is one described by Professor D. E. Hughes in a paper read before the Royal Society 'On the Action of Sonorous Vibrations in varying the Force of an Electric Current.' The passage of electric currents along wires is affected if the wires are subjected to strains; and to quote the Professor's words, 'inasmuch as the conveyance of sonorous vibrations induces rapid variations in the strains at different points of a wire, he believed that the wire would vary in its resistance when it was used to convey sound.' To investigate this, he made a rough-and-ready telephone with a small bar-magnet four inches long, half the coil of an ordinary electro-magnet, and a square piece of ferrotype iron three inches square clamped between two boards, and found himself thereby furnished 'with an extremely delicate *phonoscope* or sound detector,' taking a small clock or a voice as the source of sound.

It is to be understood that a telephone used in this way involves the use of a battery as well as wires to conduct the electric current. Professor Hughes has found, after many experiments, that certain substances placed at the point of contact of the wires intensify to a surprising degree sounds made within the circuit, or in proximity. These substances may be iron filings, metallic powders of other kinds, pieces of gas carbon, charcoal interpenetrated by molecules of mercury, and others. 'Molecular action alone,' says the Professor, 'explains to me all the effects produced. Size or shape does not affect them. A piece of willow charcoal the size of a pin's head is quite sufficient to reproduce articulate speech.' Inclose a few pieces of the charcoal in a small glass tube, plug the ends with carbon, attach the wires, and a highly sensitive conductor is produced, which when used as a telephone requires no diaphragm, and conveys sounds which under ordinary circumstances are absolutely inaudible. Another form, perhaps more sensitive, is a small pencil of carbon supported vertically between two small cubes of carbon, which are fastened to a board. These facts led to the devising of an instrument for magnifying weak sounds, to which the name *microphone* has been given. As regards its sensitiveness we are told that 'if a pin be laid upon a table, a distinct sound is emitted, or if a fly be confined under a table-glass, we can hear the fly walking with a peculiar tramp of its own. The beating of a pulse, the tick of a watch, the tramp of a fly, can thus be heard at least a hundred miles distant from the source of sound. In fact, when further developed, we may fairly expect the in-

strument to do for us, with regard to faint sounds, what the microscope does with matter too small for human vision.'

Medical practitioners have caught at the notion that an instrument so delicate may be used with advantage in auscultation. It might be important to hear distinctly obscure sounds within the body; but so far as experiments have yet been carried they do not succeed better than with the stethoscope. But it is now proved by experiment that the microphone may be turned to good account in surgical operations. If the existence of a stone in the bladder is suspected, it can be verified by the microphone: when the surgeon's 'sound' (instrument) touches the concretion, however small, a distinct click is heard. In like manner the smallest fragments may be detected after an operation for lithotomy. The presence of a bullet or pieces of bone in a wound, or of a buried stump in the groin, could also be discovered. Another notion is that some way may be found to assist the hearing of deaf people by microphonic means.

At one of the conversazioni held at the Royal Society an instrument called *phonoscope* was exhibited, which shews curious effects of sound on colour. A film composed of soap and glycerine is produced on a horizontal orifice, below which is a flexible tube carrying a mouth-piece. When the usual colours appear on the film, a by-stander sounds a vocal note into the mouth-piece: the colours suddenly arrange themselves in beautiful patterns, with vortices of colour here and there rotating swiftly and producing singularly beautiful effects. The patterns and vortices vary according to the pitch of the note; hence a long succession of changes can be brought before the eye of the observer.

A patent steam sentinel safety-valve was exhibited at the last meeting held by the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society at Falmouth. It is set to a given pressure, and whenever that pressure is exceeded, it sounds an alarm and at the same time indicates the pressure of the steam. Moreover, it is so constructed that it cannot be tampered with, and thus combines within itself the conditions essential to a perfect safety-valve. The published Report states that it 'can be fitted to any boiler in a couple of hours, as all that has to be done is to tap a hole and screw it in.'—A triple drill by Mr Vesper of Plymouth is an ingenious machine which by the rotation of a single axle drives three parallel drills at once.—A gas-making machine, described as thoroughly compact and portable, produces gas which 'being heavier than the air, the generator has only to be fixed above the lights to be supplied, and the gas flows to the burner by its own gravity.'—Another contrivance, Lot's Patent Check Till, offers important advantages to all shopkeepers, as will be understood from the official description: 'It will check every penny taken and paid, better than keeping a cashier and using cheque-books. It occupies no more time than the ordinary till. If an assistant should take money of a customer and fail to put it in the till, it can be detected at once. If only part of the amount is put in, it will shew how much has been withheld. If any cash has been taken out, it will shew the amount. The till cannot be opened without its being known, and the number of times. It will shew how much

money there ought to be in at any time. Any amount of change can be left in for use, and yet none can be taken away without its being known. It can be left any length of time without being cleared, and will shew the amount there ought to be in without counting the cash. It can be used as a desk, or let in level with the counter-top if required. It shews the number of customers waited upon by each assistant; and if a line is drawn across the paper close to the glass every hour, it tells the number of customers at any given time.' And all these advantages are wound up with the brief statement, 'interest on outlay and cost of working, one halfpenny a day.' Inquiries concerning this ingenious till should be addressed to Mr Slade Oliver, Falmouth.

At the same meeting, Mr Gloyne exhibited paper carpet made by stretching hessian (a kind of canvas) on a perfectly level floor, and pasting thereon two layers of paper, the upper one being a photographic representation of different kinds of wood, 'finished with a coating of a peculiar varnish, wonderfully hard and wear-resisting.'

In the Report on the Progress of Iron and Steel Industries in Foreign Countries, recently published by the Iron and Steel Institute, it is stated that the long-desired iron sleeper for railways has at last been invented in Austria, where, after severe and protracted trials, it proved highly satisfactory. It is described as a 'longitudinal sleeper, with a light footless rail . . . infinitely more simple, lighter, easier to lay, and more economical at first outlay than any other iron permanent sleeper with which we are acquainted.'

The American exploring colony which is to be established in the Arctic regions will be furnished with all the instruments required for astronomical, magnetic, and meteorological observations. To ascertain the direction of the winds will be an important part of their task; and as weathercocks indicate the lower currents only, small balloons are to be provided, which when sent aloft will shew the direction of the upper currents. With this scheme is combined a secret hope that some day, when the colonists shall have a complete knowledge of the aerial movements, they may venture to visit the Pole in a balloon and return to their settlement. Assuming that outward and homeward currents exist in different directions, it might be possible to survey all that unknown and desolate region which forms the nucleus of the Arctic Circle. The large deposits of coal discovered by Sir George Nares's expedition will enable the adventurous colonists to keep themselves warm, and to make gas in large quantities when their balloon shall be provided.

Mr Bennett of New York is, as our readers already know, about to send an exploring ship to the north by way of Behring's Strait; and our Dutch neighbours, whose achievements in Arctic discovery are so well and widely known, have despatched a small vessel to explore to the east of Novaya Zemlya. In presence of such persevering endeavours, we would fain believe that the polar secrets will at last be revealed.

The last part of *Proceedings* of the Linnæan Society of New South Wales contains notice of a collection of spiders which were exhibited mounted on glass slides inclosed in glass tubes filled with clear spirits of wine. The spiders were fixed to the slides by clear gum which rapidly hardens in

spirits; and we are informed that by this method of mounting, the specimens are not only improved in appearance, but the most minute anatomical details can be examined under the microscope without the necessity of removing them from the slide or tube.

Professor de Chaumont of the Army Medical School, Netley, in the Appendix to his Report on the progress of hygiene for the year, points out simple methods for the detection of poisonous metals in drinking-water, and that for the determination of carbonates the use of cochineal has advantages over litmus, as it is much more sensitive, and gives much sharper indications. Its natural colour is a carmine red, which is at once changed by acids to a yellow or reddish yellow. The Professor remarks further, that the microscopic examination of water has not yet been sufficiently attended to, and that it 'is likely to lead to more useful results than chemical methods; or perhaps it would be more correct to say that chemical methods cannot be expected to produce results sufficient for hygienic purposes without the help of microscopic examination.'

Announcements of photographic pictures representing not merely light and shade but colour also have hitherto proved somewhat premature. It is reported from Munich that a method of attaining this desirable result has been devised by a gentleman well versed in practical science. The process consists, it is said, of photographing and printing the three primitive colours of a picture by three distinct operations. One photograph is taken on a plate chemically prepared so as to be sensitive to yellow rays only, and the negative of this plate is printed by a photo-lithographic process in yellow ink. In the same way a second plate will be subjected to the action of the blue rays, and the negative printed over in blue ink, to be followed in due course by the complementary red; all three colours uniting to produce the infinite variety of tints and gradations which may come within the range of the camera. The real secret of the invention consists, it seems, in the means to be adopted for thus rendering plates equally sensitive to any one of the three primitive colours, and one only. If this has really been done as reported, what a revolution there is likely to occur in the photographic world! It is right to add, however, that so far as we know, the shop-windows in Munich have not yet displayed any sun-pictures, coloured by the new process.

AN EXTRAORDINARY GIRL.

ABOUT thirty years ago, I was finishing my education in a French *pension*, where there were other three English girls, mostly qualifying themselves for teaching French. I was the oldest of the set, and was then about seventeen, and beginning to think with joy of getting home again and away from French fare and fashions. One day, to my surprise, there came a summons from Madame, and it was with some trepidation I obeyed it; but I need not have feared.

'My dear,' she said, looking at a letter in her hand, 'I hear to-day that I am to expect a young lady named Lilian Church, one of your countrywomen, not actually as a scholar, but a boarder,

though she will join in some of your studies. She is eighteen, and is betrothed; but her doctor judges well that in the meantime she should have a perfect change of scene. To you, as the eldest, I must look to shew her what kindness you can, for I must tell you there are peculiarities about her, and you must prevent your companions noticing them—at least to herself.

Here was a piece of excitement for us, in the midst of the usual school-life monotony! It may be imagined how we four girls discussed the matter, and wondered what there was peculiar in our new school-fellow. We shared a common bedroom, where we expected to have another bed introduced, as there was ample space. What, on the contrary, was our surprise to find that Miss Church was to have a small separate room opposite ours; and to our greater surprise, a workman made his appearance, who put strong iron bars on the windows, and a padlock on the door. Here was romance indeed. Evidently, Miss Church must have made an attempt to elope; nothing else could account for such strict surveillance. We could scarcely settle down to anything the day she was expected, and awaited her appearance with the greatest eagerness. One of the girls Frances Grey had just reported to us that the gentleman who had come with Miss Church had driven away, when a message came to say Madame wanted us all. As we entered the room, all our eight eyes turned to the new-comer before Madame had the time to introduce her and hand her over to our

She was perfectly different from what we had expected, bearing not a trace of English birth about her. She was very fully developed, and of medium height, with a face rather broad, but with handsome features. Her hair, of which she had great masses, was jet-black, and she had large dark eyes with a most peculiar and weird expression. In short it was a thoroughly Italian face; and we found out afterwards that Mr Church, her so-called uncle and guardian, had picked her up in Italy. He was struck with the picturesque beauty of the child, who was playing on a doorstep; and ascertaining that she was a foundling, and that her foster-parents could ill afford to support her, had adopted her himself.

After a few commonplace sentences had passed, Madame asked me if I would go and assist Miss Church to arrange her things; which I accordingly did, she in the meantime sitting by and looking on. We were thus occupied, when looking at her, I saw her face suddenly assume the most curious expression: all light seemed to have died out of her eyes; her form became somewhat rigid, and she began speaking in a low tone, but rapidly and fluently, in French. I was much alarmed; but at that moment Madame entered to see how we were getting on. On catching sight of Lillian's face, she murmured to me: 'Hush! Don't notice it. She's a somnambulist, and falls into these trances at times. I suppose she has the dread of us foreigners on her mind. Whatever you do, do not rouse her; it might be fatal.'

'But, Madame, her eyes are open.'

'Yes, my dear; they always are in such a case.' And then Madame, thinking it best to let me know the real state of the case, though warning me not to let Lillian know about it, told me the circumstances under which this young girl was sent to school.

For many months the peace of Mr Church's house had been greatly disturbed by a suspicion that there was a thief amongst the servants. The things which disappeared were of no great value, and all belonged to Miss Church—pin-cushions, brushes, articles of clothing; but though safe at night, in the morning no trace was to be found of them. At last the mystery was solved. Miss Church, who slept at the top of the house, had a friend a few doors off who slept on the same floor. One night this friend was roused by a tapping at her window. With wonderful presence of mind she opened it gently, and in climbed Lillian Church. She had clambered all along the ledge at the top of the house; but how she had escaped death no one knew. Of course, after this her window was secured, and she was watched; and it was discovered that she had herself got rid of her things by going down at night in her sleep and burying them in the garden.

Upon this further discovery of her peculiarity, an eminent doctor was consulted, who prescribed perfect change of air and scene and the society of young companions. Lillian was therefore sent to school in Paris.

I doubt whether Madame had any idea of the task she was undertaking. Certainly, if she had to keep Lillian's condition a secret confined to two or three, she was disappointed, for this strange girl used to fall into these trances at all hours of the day. The most remarkable part of the case was that, although she was downright stupid, and deficient of intelligence when awake, as soon as she fell into these sleeps she became quite as remarkably clever. After having heard her fluent conversation in the bedroom, I was greatly surprised to find that she could hardly speak at all when she had been roused from that trance and we had gone down to the *refectoire* for supper. Her French was of the very blindest English school-girl possible. Happening, however, to fall asleep some days later over a French lesson, to the astonishment of our teacher she began to speak with ease. In one of these trances one of the girls noticed that the top of her thumbs—or rather not quite the top, but the part just opposite the nail—was black. She took hold of her hand, and touching it, said: 'What's the matter with your hand, Lillian?'

Lillian snatched away her hand, crying: 'O don't; you hurt my eyes!'

We noticed after this that all reading whilst in these trances was conducted by means of the thumbs; her eyes fixed on vacancy, she would sit passing her thumbs from line to line of the book. The lessons thus learned were never remembered in her waking moments, but always came back in any succeeding trance. This peculiarity has seemed incredible to most people who have heard it, and indeed is incomprehensible; but it is in all respects nevertheless true. She used sometimes to play the piano in these trances; and although when awake she could not play better than a child of eight or ten years of age, she performed very fairly in her sleep; indeed, had it not been for the thumb difficulty, she would

have played very well; but she had to twist her thumbs in a peculiar manner, to prevent touching the black spot through which she seemed to see.

Still more extraordinary were her drawing powers when asleep. I have still a portrait of herself done in one of these trances, and one night she drew in crayons on her door an exquisite figure of an angel. Although when awake she could not remember the events which had taken place during her trance, in her trances she solved the difficulties of her waking moments. One night she was much provoked at the appearance of a bonnet sent by her milliner, as far too small for the fashion of those days. When she woke the next day, she found that she had got up in her sleep and altered the bonnet most skilfully by letting in some cardboard covered with black silk.

It was quite a common thing for her to go to bed with her masses of raven black hair down her back, and to find it most elaborately plaited on waking in the morning; and I have also known her alter articles of wearing-apparel in her sleep. She also seemed to have a gift of second-sight. In one of these trances she was noticed to be in very low spirits, and at last to burst into tears. On being asked the cause of her tears, she said she could see her betrothed in London flirting with another girl. Shortly after came a letter from her guardian with such accounts of the young man's behaviour with the girl of whom Lilius had been jealous, that the engagement was broken off.

She told most of our fortunes in her sleep; but in my case, I am bound to confess without success. Whether she was more correct in regard to herself, I do not know. She foretold that she would be killed by a fall from her horse at the age of thirty. But it seemed unlikely she would live to that age if her somnambulism continued, as after these trances she often had the most fearful illness, both heart and brain being affected by them. One of the worst of these came on after a trance she had fallen into at church: she walked, still asleep, out with us afterwards, but unluckily woke in the Champs-Élysées, and was so terrified that it was with difficulty we got her home. When at length we did so, she had a terrible illness, from which she was scarcely expected to recover. She had the best physicians in Paris, and they one and all declared hers to be the most wonderful case of somnambulism heard of in the present generation, with one exception—that of a young man, the particulars of whose story, however, I do not know. The disease (for such of course it was) was accounted for by them as the result of an over-amount of brain, causing consequent pressure. She may be said to have had a brain for waking purposes, and one that acted when she was asleep. What one brain knew the other did not. Evidently, the sleeping brain was the cleverest. The waking brain lacked intelligence. While the sleeping brain was active, she was in a state of somnambulism, and could do things that could not possibly have been attempted in her waking moments. Her condition was of course unnatural; it was diseased—very curious and unhealthy. The cleverest doctors in Paris who were consulted could do nothing for her.

What became of this extraordinary girl after she left school, I do not know. I quite lost sight of her, and have done so for a quarter of

a century. But still her portrait often reminds me of her. It is in water-colours, somewhat coarsely but cleverly drawn, and gives a good idea of her. Her massive braids of hair it especially exhibits to perfection; she wore it in a coronet over her head, in a style peculiar to herself. The picture has, however, a disagreeable impression upon those who look at it, from the fact that the eyes seem to follow you wherever you go.

For ourselves at school, I cannot say whether we felt most fear of our unusual school-fellow, or most curiosity about her, a curiosity which we were always able to gratify in her sleep. She was conscious herself that she often said things in these trances which she would not have said when awake, and used to beg us not to repeat to her any of the things she had said to us, which, however, our natural sense of honour would have forbidden us from doing; nor indeed did we take any unfair advantage of her peculiarity; only, when she was inclined to talk in her sleep, we were content to listen, and to gather some portion of her unusual history.

DESERTED.

A *WINTER* lane, where wild-birds sing
All through the Summer day;
A beech-tree old, whose branches fling
Long shadows o'er the way.

A nest, built up in the rustling boughs,
Lined soft with moss, so green,
A tiny dwelling—a woodland house,
With leaves for a sheltering screen.

Three delicate eggs, that pearl-like lie
Beneath two brooding wings,
A mate that hovers all watchful by,
Or sits beside, and sings.

A careless boy, with a pitiless heart,
That cares not for lovely things;
A bird, that rises with timid start,
On scared and fluttering wings.

A sorrowful note of plaint and woe
Rings out on the quiet air,
And the pearl-like eggs lie crushed below,
On the beech-roots, old and bare.

And still, in the boughs of the old beech-tree,
'Mid its rustling sprays of green,
The deserted nest, you still may see
Peep out from its verdant screen.

But the bird on its gay and glad some wing
Returns to the nest no more;
And the mate that would sit on the boughs and sing,
His summer songs are o'er.

And nought can bring from the happy Past
When light and love have fled
(Though the walls of the dear old home may last),
But memories of the dead.

J. C. H.

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